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A THEORY OF REVOLUTIONARY WARFARE
AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE BOLIVIAN ADVENTURE
OF CHE GUEVARA

⑨ Master's thesis

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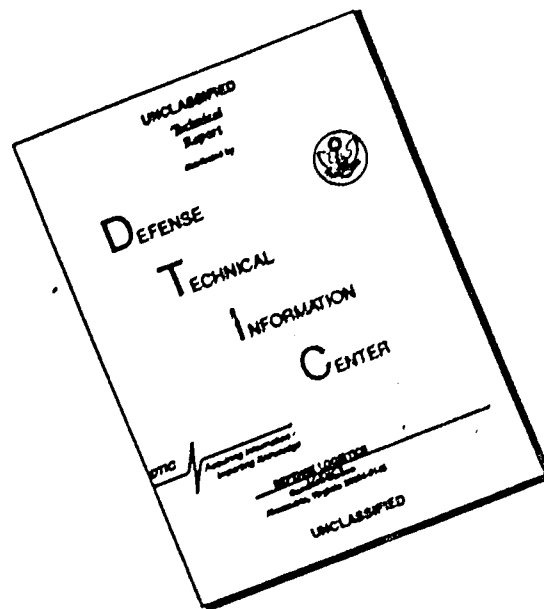
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INTRODUCTION

Traditional armed forces no longer enjoy their accustomed decisive role. Victory no longer depends on one battle over a given terrain.¹

Under President John F. Kennedy, the United States Military Establishment became an instrument of direct involvement in the internal affairs of "Third World" countries, and counterinsurgency warfare became a high-priority consideration. The United States Army Special Forces, obscure under President Eisenhower, were elevated to the role of the Army's elite force by President Kennedy. These Green Berets were given the mission to advise, train, and assist indigenous forces of many underdeveloped countries in the conduct of counterguerrilla warfare, and the Special Warfare Center at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina became the mecca to which foreign officers made pilgrimage to receive the latest in doctrine and techniques.

Required to read Mao, Giap, Lawrence, and Guevara, American (and foreign) officers became familiar with the political, social, economic, and psychological aspects of insurgency. Armed with this knowledge, imbued with Kennedy's spirit, and highly trained in tactics and techniques, American officers were deployed around the world as advisors.

In Latin America alone, hundreds of mobile training teams were deployed annually to teach everything from well-drilling to command tactics. The success of these training missions was impressive, but something was still missing--political rationale. Bernard Fall accurately observed that The People and The Army must emerge on the same side of the fight. Guerrilla warfare is nothing but a tactical appendage of far vaster political context and no matter how expertly it is fought by competent and dedicated professionals it cannot possibly make up for the absence of a political rationale.²

On the tactical level, we had learned from the errors of the past. The French disaster at Dien Bien Phu became symbolic of the inflexibility of many military leaders and their intransigent attitude concerning abandonment of conventional tactics in the conduct of this "old-new" form of warfare.³ Yet, despite this lesson in futility we were soon conducting our own Indochina War in the conventional manner. One Special Forces officer observed that we were advising the wrong side, and his traditionalist colleagues soon became interested in "body count" as a method of measuring success. As United States forces became more and more involved, technology, ordnance, and fire power assumed greater and greater importance. The objective of the Vietnam conflict became increasingly more muddled, and the only solution seemed to be the application of more technology, ordnance, and fire power. The symptoms were being treated rather than the causes. "When a country is being subverted it is not being out-fought, it is being out-administered. 'Whether we have the 'body count,' the 'kill count,' the 'structure count,' or the 'weapons count,' these are almost meaningless

"Whether it is the Congo, Vietnam or Venezuela it is totally irrelevant.

considerations in an insurgency situation. We can lose weapons and still win the insurgency. On the other hand, we can win the war and lose the country."⁴

The United States did not completely ignore the non-military aspects of the Vietnam insurgency. We spent millions of dollars on civic action through USAID. S-5 staff positions were operating down to battalion level to handle psychological and civic action operations. However, the S-5's activities were often the lowest on the commander's priority list, and, even among those commanders who showed interest in this area, their interest was all too often in the numbers game. The number of schools rebuilt, the number of wells drilled, the miles of roads built became convenient measuring devices of "pacification." Fall warned, "Civic action is not the construction of privies or the distribution of anti-malarial sprays. One can't forget an ideology; one can't fight a militant doctrine with better privies. Yet this is done constantly. One side says 'land reform' and the other says 'better culverts.' One side says 'we're going to kill all those nasty village chiefs and landlords;' the other responds 'yes, but look, we want to give you prize pigs to improve your strain.' These arguments just do not match."⁵

Despite the long list of works on the subject, insurgency is still probably the aspect of warfare that is least read by the professional soldier, nor are many military leaders showing any inclination to reevaluate their role in this kind of conflict. The policy of the present administration seems to be one of withdrawal from involvement in insurgency wars. Our experience in Indochina has undoubtedly contributed to this position. Apolitical by training and tradition, the conventional soldier can retreat behind the comfortable platitude that he is purely a professional tactician with no need to involve himself with anything but troop movement, fire power, management, and logistical problems. This attitude may well operate against involvement in any future Vietnams and, in the long run, will lessen the number of options available to a commander in chief when contemplating intervention. For those of us, however, who were a part of the era of "Flexible Response," a clearer understanding of the prolog may be worthwhile. For those of us who still have concern over potential future involvement in this type of warfare, this study may prove to be beneficial in averting repetition of the mistakes of Vietnam.

The literature on revolutionary or insurgency warfare generally agrees with the position that popular support is the key to success. This thesis proposes, as necessary, certain elements to insure popular support. Part I includes historical background, a formula for insurgency, and the application of that formula to various insurgency situations. Part II consists of the application of the formula to and an analysis of the "Bolivian Adventure" of Dr. Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Also included are unpublished materials and this writer's observations based on personal experience in Bolivia during the years 1967 and 1968.

PART I

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF GUERRILLA WARFARE

Guerrilla warfare is a form of warfare by which the strategically weaker side assumes the offensive in selective forms, times and places.¹

History is filled with examples of the difficulties and failures of traditional military forces in dealing with the guerrilla or partisan. Frederick's failure to reckon with the Croatian irregulars during the Seven Years' War cost him forty percent of his army.² Braddock's defeat in the French and Indian War ranks as one of the great ambushes of all time. The Virginia Militia under Washington, familiar with the unconventional tactics of the American Indians, barely saved the regulars from complete annihilation.³

The word "guerrilla," Spanish for "little war," was first applied to independent bands of Spaniards fighting Napoleon's occupation armies. It was in Spain that Napoleon's generals suffered their worst defeats. Massena, Ney, Victor, and Marmont were defeated more by the reprisals of the irregulars than by the efforts of Wellington.⁴ This partisan resistance cost Napoleon one hundred soldiers a day and turned the occupation of Spain into a nightmare.⁵

During the Boer war, it took two and a half years for a vastly superior force of British troops with equal mobility, using a scorched-earth policy, internment camps, block houses, and barbed wire, to defeat DeWitt's guerrillas.⁶ In World War I the only Central Power force to avoid defeat in the field was led by Colonel Von Littow-Vorbeck. Using guerrilla tactics in his East African campaign, Vorbeck's 3,500 Europeans and 12,000 natives neutralized 130,000 enemy troops and cost the British an expenditure of 72 million pounds.⁷

Also during the Great War a strange little Englishman, T. E. Lawrence, demonstrated to the world the value of guerrilla techniques. "One Englishman dismissed him as a comical little bastard and others have been lost in the beauties of his prose and the word portraits of Arab life. Whatever the truth--he was the first man to reduce guerrilla warfare to a set of rules and he was the first leader to see the true objective of guerrilla warfare as not necessarily fighting."⁸ Lawrence, in leading his Arabs against the Turks, used the Arabs' superior mobility and ability to disperse into the desert. He imposed upon the Turks the necessity of defending everywhere.⁹

During World War II the Russians used partisan forces to aid every retreat and every advance. Stalin's broadcast to his people in July of 1941 exhorted them "to scorch the earth and to fight as a nation of guerrillas."¹⁰ The Germans futilely tried to hunt down the partisans, but small German patrols were cut to pieces, and large ones returned empty handed. The strength of the partisans lay in their ability to disperse and disappear among the population. The invaders were inexperienced in "backwoods" fighting and the partisans, with their superior communications with the inhabitants, stayed ahead of the German units. Retaliatory measures against the population merely dispersed them into inaccessible areas.¹¹ In a single month during the Russian advance in 1944, the partisans, operating behind German lines, destroyed thirty-three troop trains, two armored trains, and a railroad bridge.¹²

In Yugoslavia, Tito's partisans were resisting the Germans. Tito was destroying the monarchy and with the support of the "have nots" was more effectively killing Germans. Churchill decided to back Tito's partisan force that was tying up twelve to thirteen German divisions.¹³

In 1942 Chinese guerrillas made it necessary for the Japanese to use more troops in that theater than in all others combined.¹⁴

The resistance movements of history and the numerous small wars of the twentieth century include an array of terms: insurgency, banditry, revolutionary warfare, guerrilla warfare, wars of National Liberation, partisan warfare, peoples war, . . .¹⁵ "Whatever the label used, it is obvious that conventional or traditional military strength can make little headway against the mobility of furtive groups which strike and melt away. Nor is it likely that the atomic weapons will detract from the timeless efficacy of guerrilla warfare."¹⁶

T. E. Lawrence and Mao Tse-tung have written extensively about guerrilla warfare. They, in turn, have been analyzed by numerous writers trying to clarify the principles of this kind of struggle. Traditional military thinkers have worked out principles of war to facilitate orderly critiques, campaigns, and battles.¹⁷ More recent authors have also made considerable contributions to the systematizing of guerrilla warfare theory. Mao Tse-tung's guerrilla warfare experience was based on the Chinese words "yu chi chan." Yu means travel or room, chi means strike, attack, or rout, and chan means war and battle. These words have come to mean guerrilla warfare or revolutionary warfare. Mao describes revolutionary warfare as offensive strategy. The defense is used to prepare for the attack, and the retreat is used in order to advance.¹⁸

"Our strategy is one against ten while our tactics can be formulated as consisting of ten against one."¹⁹ This equates with the traditional principles of economy of force and mass. Mao's ideas, however, went far beyond an exercise in conventional military principles. He looked at the intangibles of time, space, and will. He willingly traded space for time and used

time to produce will.²⁰ To Mao, will meant the people and here begins the critical difference between traditional and revolutionary thinking. To the former the destruction of the enemy force is the objective. The major factors considered are the mission, the enemy, the terrain, and the resources. To the latter, the one factor that is essential is the inhabitant.²¹

Mao adds "Communists should base their power for their revolution on their peasantry, on the agricultural workers."²² In his report on the struggle in the Sinkiang Mountains dated 25 November 1928, he listed the following requirements for success: (1) a sound mass base, (2) a sound party organization, (3) a fairly strong Red army, (4) favorable terrain for military operations, and (5) sufficient economic resources.²³ The priority given to things purely military is enlightening. For Mao, popular support is the key to success.

Three phases for the conduct of revolutionary war were specified by Mao:

Phase 1--

The Strategic Defense. During this time the revolutionary warfare leader reverses the normal practice of warfare. He seeks to avoid any engagement where he is likely to suffer loss. Mao warns the guerrillas not to permit themselves to be maneuvered into positions where they are robbed of the initiative and are forced to fight.²⁴ The motto of the guerrilla should be "hit and run, disperse and survive." The stress is on dispersion in the early phase. When the enemy is in an extended defense and sufficient force cannot be centralized against him, the guerrillas must disperse. They must harass and they must demoralize him. When encircled by the enemy, the guerrillas must disperse and withdraw. They must disperse when the nature of the ground limits their actions. They must disperse when the availability of supplies limits action, and they must disperse in order to promote movements over a wide area. About survival, Che also had something to add. At the outset, "the essential task of the guerrilla is to keep himself from being destroyed. When the guerrillas have taken up an inaccessible position, out of reach of the enemy, or having assembled forces that deter the enemy from attacking, they ought to proceed to the gradual weakening of the enemy."²⁵

Hit and run is the age-old weapon of the guerrilla. Strike where the enemy is weakest and retreat in the face of his strength. A multiplicity of minor coups and threats have a greater effect on tipping the scales than a few major hits. This creates a widespread impression among the population.²⁶

Phase 2--

Equilibrium or Stalemate. Customarily a revolutionary army seeks a major military encounter only when it is sure of its numerical, technical, and strategic superiority in a given circumstance. Until this time arrives, the objective will be to drain the morale of the pacification forces through raids, ambushes, skirmishes, reprisals, and a steady stream of carefully controlled propaganda.²⁷ The stalemate period requires continuous small victories with losses kept at a minimum.²⁸ Giap's understanding of this phase was made suspect when he launched all-out attacks against the French in 1950-51. The stunning defeat forced him to fall back to the earlier phase and necessitated a considerable rebuilding of confidence and strength.²⁹ Stalemate is the point where the two forces are approximately equal in strength, but more importantly it marks the point where the government or the occupation force is incapable of launching a major assault against the guerrillas.

Phase 3--

Strategic Offense. In this phase, revolutionary warfare forces have gained the initiative and a war of movement of large units is launched.³⁰ This phase contains many aspects of conventional warfare and as in the case of the French at Dien Bien Phu, the results are often devastating.³¹ This third phase, outright war, is the ultimate stage of the rebellion and needs a steady incessant flow of heavy as well as light arms, the whole-hearted support of the majority of the population and perhaps help from abroad.³² The revolutionary warfare leader does not ignore the principles of military strategy, but he is governed by additional criteria: the environment and the support of the community.³³ The killing aspect of war is always secondary. The political administration and the ideological aspects are primary.³⁴ These additional considerations have been summarized as follows: Revolutionary warfare is the application of regular warfare methods to the propagation of an ideology or political system.³⁵ Mao quoting Lenin ". . . without revolutionary theory there can be no revolution."³⁶ It is fair to assume, at this point, that in order to conduct a successful revolutionary war popular support must be achieved. In order to achieve popular support certain other factors are obviously required. The following thesis is therefore proposed.

CHAPTER II

A FORMULA FOR REVOLUTIONARY WARFARE

The achievement of popular support requires an organization or a leadership element to verbalize the dissatisfaction of the population and to provide direction for the movement. This leadership can be called a catalyst. Additionally, the population cannot be recruited without a cause, a reason for supporting the revolutionary struggle. The population must have a grievance, real or imagined, that can be turned into a goal by the leadership element. Lawrence pointed out that it is not necessary for the entire population to be actively sympathetic, only a small percentage is initially required. The leadership element will use the cause to gather popular support and will build its strength from the increasing awareness of the population of the possibility of attainment of the goal. In addition to the catalyst and the cause there must be some means of obtaining outside support. The role of the patron or sponsor in providing support for revolutionary or guerrilla warfare conflicts has been of critical importance and cannot be minimized. A successful revolutionary warfare situation can be reduced to the following formula: Revolutionary Warfare = Popular Support + Leadership + Cause + Sponsor.

Popular Support

It is absolutely necessary for the partisans to win the support and the participation of the peasant masses.³⁷

Lawrence was quite specific in his thesis on popular support. Rebellion "must have a friendly population, not actively friendly but sympathetic to the point of not betraying the revolutionary movement to the enemy. Rebellion can be made of 2 percent active in a striking force and 98 percent passively sympathetic."³⁸ Liddell Hart wrote: "Guerrilla warfare is waged by a few but is dependent upon the support of the many--it can operate effectively and attain its end only when collectively backed by the sympathy of the masses."³⁹ Taber puts it simply that "without the consent and active aid of the people, the guerrilla would be merely a bandit and would not long survive."⁴⁰ Bernard Fall helped clarify the basic difference between armed guerrilla struggle and true revolutionary war with the following formula: $RW = GW + P$ (Revolutionary Warfare = Guerrilla Warfare + Political Action). Guerrilla warfare simply means small war. The use of small unit tactics is something that every second lieutenant of infantry knows. When political action is added, however, the whole nature of the conflict changes and becomes revolutionary warfare.⁴¹ By adding political action the civilian population is acknowledged as the key element. As was pointed out earlier, this marks the major difference between the conventional and traditional approach to war and the true revolutionary war. The numerous revolutionary wars fought since the end of World War II all had popular support as their critical element. The French insisted on fighting an old-fashioned military campaign in Indochina: technically brilliant

under Marshal de Lattre, defensive under Salan, and foolhardy under Navarre. In terms of results, however, their conduct of the war was irrelevant. The French attempt to reestablish colonial rule was doomed because the political action of the Viet Minh had already created a sound base of popular support.⁴² The bitter experience of the French Expeditionary Force resulted in a reappraisal of traditional warfare methods among some elements of the French Army. In analyzing their defeat, a segment of the French officer corps developed a new understanding of revolutionary warfare. While other colonial powers, including Great Britain, contented themselves with techniques, French writers Bonnet, Hogard, Lacheroy, Nemo, and Trinquier developed a doctrine that included violent and non-violent measures against military and non-military targets and included intensive indoctrination to combat revolutionary cadres.⁴³ La Guerre Psychologique became a weapon in the arsenal that was to be used extensively in the Algerian War that followed.⁴⁴ In Algeria, the rebels, too, understood that the key to success was popular support.

Without popular support we will get no intelligence.
Without the protection of the population, we can neither maintain our secrecy nor conduct rapid movements. Without the population, the guerrillas cannot accomplish their mission with zeal and rapidity. In short without the population we cannot conduct guerrilla warfare.⁴⁵

Malaya

The Malayan Emergency along with the HUK Rebellion, dealt with later on, is one of the two examples of the failure of revolutionary war. It has been used to prove that the Communist-inspired wars of liberation are not always successful. While there is some danger in trying to apply the Malayan experience to all other situations, the lack of popular support is so prominent that an examination is warranted. In Malaya the Japanese Army inflicted upon the British their greatest humiliation of World War II.⁴⁶ Resistance to the postwar reestablishment of the British rule evolved from the anti-Japanese resistance of the Malayan underground.⁴⁷ The British, upon returning to Malaya were faced with a clandestine organization with five years of guerrilla warfare experience.⁴⁸ The direction of this clandestine apparatus was provided by the Malayan Communist Party (MCP),⁴⁹ predominantly Chinese in membership. In February 1946, the MCP called for a general strike and in the year that followed there were a total of 300 major industrial disturbances.⁵⁰ (At this time, tin mines and rubber plantations were enjoying an economic boom.)⁵¹ Paget maintains that the Malayan Communist Party was responding to Russian instructions put forth in a February 1942 meeting in Calcutta.⁵² But this time, the MCP had made a decision to go beyond the use of the strike as a weapon and to start armed insurrection. The British seemed slow to respond to the numerous signs, but after several weeks of terrorism they acknowledged the existence of an emergency.⁵³

*Support for the rural guerrillas came from the half million Chinese squatters.

The Malayan Communist Party was the party of the Chinese minority in Malaya. Crozier describes the Malay Chinese as sitting "like an undigested mass on the political body of Malaya. Partly by choice and nature and partly by law, they were disbarred from political offices and were denied the right to own land.⁵⁴ Although Crozier warns against attaching too much importance to their political inferiority, he acknowledges that the existence of any grievances was "grist to the mill of the Communists".⁵⁵ From these small farmers came intelligence, supplies, and shelters.⁵⁷ The British, under General Briggs, developed a plan to cut off the guerrillas from these necessities and at the same time to cut the ground from under the Communist's social propaganda. The plan was instituted after the regular British battalions had been unable to deal with the guerrillas on a purely military basis.⁵⁸ The Briggs plan had the following objectives:

1. To dominate the populated areas and to build up a feeling of complete security which would in time result in the steady and willing flow of information coming in from all sources.
2. To break up the Communist organization within the populated areas.
3. To isolate the guerrillas from their food and supply organization in the populated areas.
4. To destroy the terrorists by forcing them to attack the security forces on the latter's own ground.⁵⁹

In order to isolate the terrorists from the rest of the population, a resettlement program was instituted. By the end of 1951, squatters numbering over 400,000 had been moved to some 500 "New Villages" at a cost of 11 million pounds.⁶⁰ In order to protect the civilian population from reprisals for assisting the security forces, the "sealed box" technique was used.⁶¹ This method, with variations, involved the use of a suggestion box into which each inhabitant was required to put a piece of paper on which the person could, if he desired, write a message. As names began to appear on the slips of paper, the counterintelligence mechanism could build up a network diagram of the clandestine organization and begin surveillance operations. Eventually a roundup and interrogation of known and suspected guerrilla supporters was conducted, leading to corroboration of information, further identification of terrorists, and finally to the destruction of the guerrilla organization.⁶²

To make the plan work required manpower. The security forces had 40,000 regular troops, 40,000 policemen, and 250,000 home guards or self-defense forces. The guerrilla strength was estimated to be six thousand.⁶³ This 55 to 1 ratio is misleading however.⁶⁴ But, then, combat strength is relatively unimportant in this type of conflict. Paget summarizes the reasons for the failure of the Malayan insurgency as follows: the insurgents were

⁶⁴The actual combat strength in the jungle was more closely balanced.⁶⁴

ethnically identifiable; i.e., 95 percent Chinese; they were unable to secure outside bases and were unable to arouse world opinion; they underestimated the effect of the British Navy in sealing off any outside logistical support. Most importantly, they miscalculated the Malayan attitude. There was little discontent among the population. The population was alienated by their acts of sabotage and the resultant unemployment and loss of income. The Communists could offer only a Communist state. The British ultimately offered independence.⁶⁵

Britain's share in the victory was moral rather than material, but the Malayan Federation did join the Commonwealth.⁶⁶

Cyprus and Kenya

Not all the post-war revolutionary warfare struggles were Communist inspired. In Cyprus, Colonel Grivas, anything but a Communist, launched his campaign against British rule in 1955.⁶⁷ The campaign, primarily one of terrorism, was directed first against the British and later against pro-British sympathizers among the Cypriot population. The ultimate goal of the revolt was unification (enosis) with Greece.⁶⁸ With the moral support of Bishop Makarios and logistical support from Greece, Grivas and his 300 terrorists were able to operate without a major setback for five years. The British, with a favorable troop ratio of 110 to 1, finally chose to come to terms with the rebels.⁶⁹ The Cypriot Revolt failed to gain unification with Greece, but the island did gain its independence. Without the support of a segment of the population and the terror-induced submissiveness of the rest, Grivas could not have lasted as long as he did. The Greek Orthodox clergy also administered the following oath to insurgents (EOKA) recruits:

I swear in the name of the Holy Trinity that I shall work with all my power for the liberation of Cyprus from the British yoke, sacrificing for this even my own life--I shall never reveal to anyone any secrets concerning our organization, neither the name of the leader nor that of any of the members, even if I am caught and tortured. If I betray this oath, I shall deserve every punishment meted out to me as a traitor and may I suffer eternally.⁷⁰

In Kenya, the British were faced with the Mau-Mau Emergency. In the early 1950's Kikuyu tribesmen initiated a series of raids against European settlers. The British having identified the dissident element, began a resettlement program based on their Malayan experience. The Mau-Mau raiders committed a colossal blunder by attacking a loyal Kikuyu village on March 20, 1953. The results of the Lari Massacre were 84 dead, two-thirds of them women and children.⁷¹ This even had the effect of demonstrating that the Mau-Mau's terrorism was also directed against their fellow Africans. The British, while resettling the Kikuyu, began to create home

guard security forces among them. This risk paid off, and the Mau-Mau were eventually separated from the population and destroyed.⁷² In Kenya, as in Cyprus and Malaya, the colony eventually obtained independence.

The HUKs

Any democratic government is neither of necessity nor automatically better in the eyes of the common man than a Communist government. In order to stamp out Communism, the local government must clean its own house. A status quo that had bred virulent Communism cannot remain unchanged. Communism seldom flourishes when the people are content and prosperous basically.⁷³

During their World War II occupation of the Philippines, the Japanese were plagued by numerous guerrilla groups. In Luzon, a group called the HUKs, under the leadership of Louis Taruc, harassed the enemy and contributed to making the island uninhabitable. (HUK is a contraction of the Tagalog words Hukbo-Na-Bayan-La-Ban-Sa-Japon, meaning "peoples army (to fight) against Japan."⁷⁴) By October 1944, the HUKs controlled six provinces in Luzon and, prior to the return of the U.S. troops, planned to take over Manila. The U.S. Army disarmed the guerrillas in the city and ordered them incorporated into the Philippine Army. They refused and went under-ground.⁷⁵ In May of 1946, rebellion broke out with attacks on police stations in the countryside. The initial HUK successes were made easier by the fact that many of the villagers had called the HUKs in to protect them from the corrupt government constabulary.⁷⁶ Key points in the HUK propaganda were their promises to end tenant farming, institute land reform, and erase corruption.⁷⁷ Landlordism was a curse of the Philippines. In the Candaba area of Luzon two percent of the people owned ninety-eight percent of the land, with seventy percent of the farmers being tenants. In some provinces of Luzon, at least sixty percent of the farms were worked by tenants, and, not surprisingly, these provinces were the real HUK strongholds.⁷⁸ Louis Taruc and his American political advisor, William Pomeroy, flourished in an area where the inequity of land distribution was the greatest. It was from these below-subsistence-level farmers that they drew their recruits.⁷⁹ Pomeroy, an American Communist, organized the "Stalin University", a mobile indoctrination center.⁸⁰ The government appeared incapable of dealing with the erosion of its support by the people in favor of the guerrillas until Magsaysay was put in charge of the anti-HUK campaign. "Magsaysay realized that in order to combat the rebellion there had to be, in addition to military action, a many faceted political, psychological, technological, and socio-economic operation in the Philippines. On one hand, an all out military campaign; on the other . . . the offer of friendship, and hope for the population."⁸¹ The anti-HUK campaign included a demonstration by the government that honest elections could really be held. The military occupied the polling places, and, unlike earlier elections, insured an honest count. The military was used to arbitrate landlord and peasant disputes. Extensive military civic action helped the Philippine Army to begin

to be identified with the civilian population.⁸² In concert with military civic action activities, aggressive combat operations were conducted.

Concurrently, Magsaysay was working on the HUK underground in the cities. He was able to "double" a HUK slum leader resulting in the uncovering of the Politiburo apparatus.⁸³ "Magsaysay was possibly the only Filipino to combine the courage, wisdom, knowledge and experience to succeed in a task so late in the game."⁸⁴ The United States furnished advice and economic and material aid, but the success was purely Filipino since only native troops were used.⁸⁵ The HUKs were not defeated militarily. They lost the propaganda war. The government, by far the most popular in Philippine history, stole the cause from the HUKs and isolated them from the population.⁸⁶

Methods of Insuring Popular Support

"The population will support the side that provides it with the greatest personal security, and allows it to continue its normal routine."⁸⁷ This implies that the majority of the people want merely to be left alone. As Lawrence noted, however, the revolutionary warfare situation must, in order to be successful, have at least passive support. The active support of the population is the real objective to be gained. The extent to which the insurgents obtain this support is dependent upon their progress in winning over the population.⁸⁸ Bernard Fall contends that a system of controls over the population must be established. This system includes provisions for dealing with collaborators.⁸⁹ "It is also a conflict of persuasion, manipulation, and compulsion."⁹⁰

Terrorism is one of the natural weapons of the guerrilla force. It helps to dramatize their cause and to insure loyalty, by duress if necessary. Terrorism has been used by insurgents in Indochina, Malaya, the Philippines, Kenya, Cyprus, and Algeria, to varying degrees and with mixed success.⁹¹ "Terrorism is used by insurgents to demonstrate to a population their superiority and their ability to administer and control the population. Terrorism, or the threat of violence is also a part of internal discipline. Thayer notes only after the guerrillas "have suffered casualties through the slips or weakness of their own colleagues do they learn the necessity of extra-legal methods to enforce discipline."⁹²

Writing of Vietnam, Fall noted that in 1960 and 1961, the Communists had killed eleven village officials a day. "By the time we woke up and learned that we had a problem, the Communists had killed 10,000 village chiefs in a country that had about 16,000 hamlets. This, gentlemen, is control, not the military illusion of it."⁹³

In Cyprus it was possible that a majority of the population disapproved of Grivas' methods, even if in sympathy with his objectives. But as Crozier points out, terrorism blurs the outlines and it is useless to attempt to

*Revolutionary warfare is sometimes a war of terror and torture.

**Terrorism is a two-edge sword.

deal with people when they are afraid to speak.⁹⁴ Cyprus provides a good example of an insurgency that was successful simply because terrorism, sabotage, and constant disorder made the island too unprofitable and politically embarrassing for the British to remain.⁹⁵

Terrorism can be counter productive as well. This is exemplified by a Peking directive to the Malayan insurgents. In this directive the insurgents were advised to cease all acts of terrorism, as they were calculated to alienate the masses.⁹⁶

Other methods of insuring control and support of the population include the use of armed propaganda; i.e., subtle intimidation with covert threats, overt propagandizing. Pile describes the Viet Cong success in this area.

. . .In the first, which might be called the psychological warfare stage, a base is established among the people using propaganda and political warfare; discontent among the people is converted into channelled activity; cells are formed; most activity is on the individual level and of course is clandestine. . . .

. . .The chief effort was communication; the chief medium was the especially created organization: the chief daily activity of the cadres was agitation and propaganda work. Communication facilitated organization, which facilitated mobilization. The unchanging purpose was to turn rural Vietnam into a sea of angry villagers who would rise up simultaneously in the general uprising. . . .

. . .In South Vietnam this campaign against the population was more political than military. Tremendous amounts of manpower were spent in converting, indoctrinating, agitating, and propagandizing the people. Ample use was made of terror and key assassinations of key opposition figures within and outside the government. . . .⁹⁷

Terrorism, armed propaganda, population and resource control are merely means used to achieve the end--popular support. Every phase of life is involved in the struggle, and this gives revolutionary warfare the aspect of a total war. Kelly notes that revolutionary warfare is "total war on a limited scale because it utilizes propagandistic appeal to whole populations and all economic, social and political events it can avail itself of."⁹⁸

In accepting the proposal that revolutionary war is total war on a reduced scale it follows that defeat is only acknowledged when one side abandons all hope of winning popular support.⁹⁹

CHAPTER III

THE CAUSE

It is axiomatic in the field of revolutionary warfare that the potential insurgent takes his source of power from a population which has become discontented with existing conditions which cannot be changed by peaceful and legal means.¹⁰⁰

Causes for resistance in revolutionary warfare are as numerous as the number of historical examples of resistance. Causes can stem from resistance to foreign invaders, from the population's desire for national independence, from the desire for the relief of racial oppression, from the desire for the elimination of colonial or foreign exploitation, from the desire for alleviation of economic destitution or the elimination of corruption.¹⁰¹ The following constitutes some of the conditions which can be exploited in the development of insurgency, as enumerated in the Counter-Insurgency Planning Guide (ST 31-176).¹⁰²

1. Social (Conditions)

a. The breakdown of traditional social . . . customs as a result of contact with other cultures.

b. The expectation of radically improved living conditions within a short period of time.

c. Pressure of a dense and rapidly expanding population in an agrarian society.

d. Gaping rifts in the population stemming from class ethnic religious or linguistic differences.

e. Aspirations of the underprivileged for improvement in their social status and the opportunities for expression and individual satisfaction.

f. Widespread illiteracy in an inadequate educational system.

g. The drift of unabsorbable numbers of people to the metropolitan areas in hopes of finding jobs and reaching easy affluence, only to be disillusioned by the lack of employment and by the living conditions they must endure.

h. Rigid class or cast systems which deny attainment of social position based on merit.

2. Political (Conditions)

- a. Present or recent domination by colonial power; lack of experienced leaders and administrators.**
- b. A government unresponsive to the aspirations of the people.**
- c. Inability of the government to fulfill ideals of liberty, justice, and democratic voice in government or misconceptions of the meaning of liberty and democracy by the population.**
- d. Tyrannical, repressive, corrupt, or incompetent government.**
- e. Lack of communication between the government and rural populations.**
- f. Lack of government control over rural areas in the consequent breakdown of law and order.**
- g. Political instability.**
- h. Frustration of articulate segments of the intelligentsia who advocate radical solutions to speed modernization.**
- i. A small but growing middle class opposed by the extremes of "right" and "left" in their struggle for political and economic influence.**

3. Economic (Conditions)

- a. Widespread poverty.**
- b. Grossly inequitable distribution of wealth and income; concentration of wealth and economic power in one class or in a few individuals or families.**
- c. Inadequate production of food to feed an expanding population.**
- d. A system of land tenure combined with usurious interest rates resulting in permanently indebted or unstable rural population.**
- e. An inadequate or unbalanced industry.**
- f. Inept, naive, ultranationalistic leaders who ignore, discount, or are ignorant of economic realities.**
- g. An inadequate or inequitable system of taxation and tax collection that provides insufficient revenue for necessary governmental functions.**

h. Dependence on foreign capital assistance and, at the same time, opposition to private foreign investment.

i. Overdependence on export raw materials or on a single commodity.

j. Large-scale underdevelopment and unemployment, often including a segment of the educated elite.

k. An unstable currency.

4. Military (Conditions)

a. Estrangement of the military forces from the people.

b. Failure to achieve an effective balance between the military and police components.

c. Organization, equipment, and tactics that are obsolete or inappropriate for combating insurgencies.

d. Inadequate intelligence training organization.

e. Military elements that are unresponsive to higher authority.

f. Factionalism within the military forces.

g. Subversive and misdirected patriotic motivations of the military establishment.

h. Lack of competent, dedicated leaders.

5. Psychological (Conditions)

a. A newly awakened rampant nationalism in upper classes and intellectuals.

b. Lack of national feeling or sense of national identity, persistence in local or tribal loyalties.

c. Anti-colonialism.

d. A psychological gap between a government and the people; lack of identification on the part of the people with the goals and objectives of a government sincerely interested in progress for the nation and its people.

e. A widespread sense of injustice and lack of means of redressing individual injustices.

f. Lack of faith in the government and in the social and economic system; lack of dynamic ideology to oppose Communism.

g. Inability and ineptness on the part of the government in using truth to counteract Communist propaganda.

Liddell Hart noted that revolutionary warfare "tends to be most effective if it blends an appeal for national resistance or for independence with an appeal to a socially and economically discontented population, thus becoming revolutionary in a wide sense."¹⁰³ That national independence is a strong motivator is borne out by the fact that in the twenty years since World War II few colonial wars have been lost by a colonial people.¹⁰⁴

In Indochina, while resisting the Japanese, the Vietminh developed political objectives the civilian population believed to be attainable. The French, upon their post-war return to Indochina, intended to give but the form of independence while they retained the substance of real power, and would only offer modified independence at best within the French Union. In the end they (the French) lost it all.¹⁰⁵ Howard observes that in Algeria the French attempted to use the weapon of political indoctrination in combating the National Liberation Front, commonly referred to as the FLN, a technique they had learned from the Vietminh. Again the French underestimated the force of nationalism.¹⁰⁶ The FLN won in Algeria not because they were Marxists but because they were Algerians. Marx and Lenin may have provided the rationale and Mao the techniques but the driving power was furnished by Mazzini.¹⁰⁷

In Cyprus, enosis was not achieved possibly because the Cypriot people did not see the United Kingdom as a restrictive colonial power. The rebellion coincided with an economic boom and the ultra-right Pan-Hellenism of Grivas was not accepted by the population.¹⁰⁸ When Bishop Makarios accepted modified independence under the Macmillan plan, rather than enosis, Grivas weighed the possibility of going it alone. He soon realized the futility of that course of action.¹⁰⁹ (Not completely, however. As late as 1973, enosis was still in question in Cyprus).¹¹⁰

Enosis as a cause in itself was just not strong enough to maintain continued popular support. In those situations not involving independence, it is the economic and political foundations for the revolution that must be sound.¹¹¹ Otherwise a guerrilla is offering only revolution for revolution's sake. In his article "Two-Thirds of the World," Douglas Dowd points out that land ownership and population pressures are often combined to create the needed power to generate rebellion.¹¹² For Che Guevara the countryside provided the ideal location.¹¹³ "The Latin American Revolutionary should strive almost exclusively to change the social form of land ownership and be above all an agrarian revolutionary."¹¹⁴ But intolerable conditions alone are not enough to cause a rebellion to break out. The potential rebel must believe that in rebelling he will improve his lot.¹¹⁵ The revolutionary leader's first task then, is to raise the level

of political consciousness of the people and involve them totally in the struggle. In order to attract the population, the revolutionary must stand on firm moral ground.¹¹⁶ He must have a clearly articulated cause, coinciding with the aspirations of the people.¹¹⁷ Taber, while acknowledging the importance of the cause, notes that in order for the revolution to become dynamic the social consciousness--the revolutionary impulse--of the population must be awakened.¹¹⁸ This leads us logically to the next requirement for a successful revolutionary warfare condition: the leadership and organization--the catalyst.

CHAPTER IV

THE CATALYST

The Filipino Communists admit their defeat was as much due to their own extremely serious mistakes, notably in the field of political organization as to the government's effective counter measures.¹¹⁹

Success in conventional military operations has long been associated with the positive leadership and a well-disciplined organization.¹²⁰ The same criteria are as applicable to the revolutionary warfare struggle. In conventional war, superior logistics and/or weight in numbers can triumph over the opponent. In revolutionary war, logistical and numerical considerations are of secondary importance when compared to the elements of leadership and organization.

This element, herein referred to as the catalyst, takes the form of a specially adapted organization whose function is to impose itself on an entire population.¹²¹ In order to prepare a population for the struggle, the catalyst must be able to articulate the cause. The Communists have not added a thing that participants in other doctrinal wars did not know, but they have developed an adaptable doctrine and organization. The success of the Communists has been based on their ability to recognize precisely the usefulness of social, economic, and political doctrines in insurgency.¹²² Communist organizations in Indochina, Malaya, and the Philippines gained much experience in resisting the Japanese and were organizationally well prepared to launch post-war insurrections.¹²³ In order to be successful, the guerrilla leadership must know the geographical aspects of the area and more importantly the social, economic, and political characteristics and the prejudices of the inhabitants. It must understand the taboos, local beliefs, superstitions, grievances, personalities, friendships, rivalries, and the language of the inhabitants.¹²⁴ In short, the guerrilla leadership must be able to "swim" at ease as "fish" in the "sea" of the population. The catalyst provides direction, organization, and mobilization for the movement.¹²⁵

While the top leadership must be dynamic, below that level there must be effective local politicians, fund raisers, and idea men (such as Tom Paine, Jefferson, Trotsky, or Che) who take the local grievances, put them into a concept, and make it into a cause for which men will fight and die.¹²⁶

Writing of the Malayan insurgency leadership, Crozier notes "for all his courage, endurance, and ruthlessness, Chinpan was not a leader of the stature of Ho Chi Minh or Giap. He failed to appeal to the non-Chinese people of Malaya and gravely misjudged his chances of success. His tactics alienated the population and when he changed them in response to Peking's orders, it was too late. He contributed nothing to the techniques of guerrilla warfare or to Communist ideology."¹²⁷

Where Ho Chi Minh succeeded brilliantly, the Greek insurgents failed because of casual and ineffective methods of political indoctrination among the Greek masses.¹²⁸

As in conventional war, each course of action must be analyzed. The consequences of each should be carefully considered prior to action. In order for the leadership element to be successful, it must be in harmony with the people. This requires a responsive, two-way flow of information. In Cyprus, Grivas was well aware that he could never train and equip his guerrillas to fight in larger units, to press home attacks, nor to withstand assaults.¹²⁹ His EOKA organization never numbered more than a few hundred, but he had thousands of more or less active supporters.¹³⁰ In order to carry out the insurgency, he tailored a terrorist organization supplemented by an ingenious communication system of couriers. This carefully organized network was designed to meet local conditions. Small pre-prepared hideouts and caches were substituted for the bases larger units would have required.¹³¹ The fact that his system never failed to function and never betrayed his whereabouts is evidence of its effectiveness.¹³² In countering an insurgency, the same requirements exist for strong leadership and organization. Magsaysay's success in counterinsurgency is a case in point.¹³³

Pike's description of the Viet Cong organization comes closest to the ideal catalyst for revolution.

Down the narrow mountain paths from North Vietnam have come Communist agitators, both Montagnard and Vietnamese, to spread their seeds of disunion and trouble. The Communists are dedicated and hard working. They live among the Montagnards, wear the same clothes, eat the same food. They learn local dialects, marry into the tribes, and aid the Montagnards in any way that will also aid the Communist cause.¹³⁴

Pike goes on to describe the early Vietminh organization.

Ho Chi Minh's organizational skills, even then were in an advanced stage of development. He gathered about him the best potential youth material, taught them how to print hectographic leaflets, conduct mass meetings, provoke strikes, and carry out other agitation propaganda activities.¹³⁵ At the same time Ho Chi Minh molded the organizational structure into a network of affiliated groups in associations of farmers, of women, of workers and also created the Anti-Imperialist League and a branch of the International Red Aids organization. The internal party arrangements remained essentially unchanged for three decades, and closely resembled the one later employed by

the National Liberation Front, that is, a hierarchy of committees pyramiding upward from villages to a central committee directing all activities.¹³⁶

To reiterate, the spark needed to ignite revolutionary wars is provided by the leadership mechanism or the catalyst. The better the organization, the more dynamic the response. The more responsive the leadership, the better the chances for success.

CHAPTER V

THE SPONSOR

International support is necessary for the revolutionary struggle in any country.¹³⁷

General Giap echoes Mao in analyzing revolutionary requirements. "We will have to receive aid from abroad in order to be able to carry out the counter offensive."¹³⁸ An insurgency requires technical skill, and "as the movement progresses, it can be expected to seek outside help in various forms; money, professional organizers, terrorists, demolitions experts, and third-degree technicians."¹³⁹

Almost every case study of revolutionary warfare includes examples of outside support. For the Arab Revolt it was the British who provided the needed support--Lawrence and others. Woodmansee calls this support "a classic case of external support and exploitations of domestic, political insurgency."¹⁴⁰ For the post World War II Greek revolutionaries, it was the USSR and Yugoslavia who provided support. For Mao, it was the USSR. For Tito, it was the OSS of the United States and its British counterpart. For the HUKs, it was the Red Chinese. (In Luzon the revolution was well sponsored and included advisors from the Chinese Eighth Route Army. It also included all Chinese guerrilla units.)¹⁴¹ For Ho Chi Minh's Vietminh, it was the United States and, in turn, both Chinese regimes.¹⁴² Outside support played a key role in the Algerian revolt. Money and materiel came from Egypt and from the Arab Middle East. This included massive gifts of money from Saudi Arabia and Iraq.¹⁴³ Safe areas and moral support came from the sister nations of Maghreb.¹⁴⁴ The Arab league financed the bases in Morocco and Tunisia.¹⁴⁵ Despite a comfortable troop ratio of 11 to 1 (the French with 760,000 and the Algerians with 65,000), the French had to seal off the Algerian-Tunisian border in order to deny the FLN outside support.¹⁴⁶ By granting independence to Tunisia, and Morocco, the French provided the Algerian rebels with two safe areas. For DeGaulle, the price for continuing the war in Algeria under these conditions was too high.¹⁴⁷ Fall points out that despite some success in the military sphere, France had become the second most hated country in the world, after South Africa, in the United Nations.¹⁴⁸

In Cyprus, Grivas' EOKA organization was sponsored by Makarios and Papagos, who made enosis official Greek policy in 1954.¹⁴⁹ The Greek government supplied the small arms, ammunition, and explosives necessary to keep the movement in operation. The capture of the Greek schooner Saint George in January 1955 and of Grivas' diary in 1956 revealed the extent of the outside sponsorship.¹⁵⁰

Sinclair acknowledges the difficulty in supporting an isolated guerrilla force in its early stages.¹⁵¹ However, when an isolated group can establish a relatively secure base of operations, or a safe area in nearby "neutral" territory, it then becomes accessible to outside support. In cases where outside support has been cut off, as in Greece after World War II, the chances for success diminish considerably. Outside support is essential for the revolutionary struggle. In order for the struggle to continue, it must have an uninterrupted flow of money, arms, equipment, trained personnel, and political and moral support from the outside.

CHAPTER VI

THE CUBAN EXPERIENCE

Guerrilla warfare is the war of the masses, the war of the people. The guerrilla fighter needs the help of the people and of the area. This is an indispensable condition.¹⁵²

Where a government has come into power through some form of popular vote, fraudulent or not, and maintains at least an appearance of constitutional legality, the guerrilla out break cannot be promoted, since the possibilities of peaceful struggle have not yet been exhausted.¹⁵³

All the elements required for a successful revolutionary war are present in the Cuban example. The causes for opposition to the Batista regime stemmed from the illegal seizure of power in 1952, from the widespread corruption and depravity of the regime, and from the tyrannical exercise of power.¹⁵⁴ Castro and his followers were initially concerned only with the legitimacy of power and with the corruption, but as the 26th of July Movement progressed, they became convinced of the need for land reform.¹⁵⁵ (Draper, ever critical of Castro, describes him as having no ideological core but filling the vacuum with different ideologies to serve his climb to power at different stages.)¹⁵⁶ This was the result of the influence of the area in which the armed guerrillas operated. Four-fifths of the squatters in Cuba were in the Sierra-Maestra area and, to this group, land reform meant land ownership. Che wrote, "The Campesino fights because he wants land, for himself, for his sons, to manage it, to sell it and to enrich himself through work."¹⁵⁷ For the Cuban revolutionaries, the causes became the latifundia system, underdevelopment, and the hunger of the people.¹⁵⁸ These middle-class revolutionaries became conscious of the needs and desires of the peasants, and in order to enlist their support, incorporated those goals into those of their anti-Batista revolution.¹⁵⁹ "The best among us felt deeply the need for agrarian reform and overturning of the social system without which the country could never achieve health."¹⁶⁰ Outside support for the Cuban Revolution came from many sources. Ninety percent of the supply sent to Cuba during the insurrection came from the United States. These supplies were financed by funds raised by the underground from among the many anti-Batista exile organizations throughout the hemisphere.¹⁶¹ This source notes sixty-two branches of the underground that were operating in the United States, Puerto Rico, and several Latin American countries. Nathaniel Weyle maintains that two Russian submarines also delivered supplies to the insurgents.¹⁶² Castro had organized an external system in 1955 whose purpose was to distribute propaganda material, gather intelligence, gather funds, provide recruits,

and smuggle equipment to the guerrillas.¹⁶³ Costa Rica and Venezuela supported the guerrillas, and officially neutral Mexico was the site of numerous training bases and field training exercises.¹⁶⁴ And it was from Mexico that the Granma sailed for Cuba.¹⁶⁵ The task of obtaining support was facilitated by the large segments of Cuban society that opposed Batista.

In the Cuban cities, university youth organizations conducted a multitude of activities. If Cubans and foreigners were unaware that there were armed guerrillas in the hills, "they could not ignore the exploding bombs in the cinemas and gambling dens of Havana."¹⁶⁶ Students conducted the greater part of these terrorist acts and assassinations and contributed to the constant state of tension that resulted.¹⁶⁷ They in turn suffered most directly from Batista's counter-terror measures.¹⁶⁸ Regis Debray later wrote that while urban terrorism cannot assume any decisive role, and entails certain dangers, it does have value in immobilizing thousands of soldiers.¹⁶⁹ The contrast between Castro's and Batista's treatment of prisoners and the civilian population is instructive. Despite the torture and killings inflicted on them by government troops, the rebels constantly treated their prisoners with humanity and consideration. (Mao had earlier recognized the release of captured prisoners as a most effective method of propaganda, as ". . . it knocks the bottom out of the enemy's slander that Communist bandits kill everyone in sight."¹⁷⁰ Supplies requisitioned from the peasants were duly paid for, and the strictest discipline and morality was exhibited by the rebels.¹⁷¹

In the rebel zones, agrarian reform peasant congresses and courts were part of the reforms instituted. These measures were the prototypes of the future state proposed by the movement.¹⁷² As a result, "probably the greatest single handicap in any effort to oust Castro is the fact that he has carried out a successful popular and, in many respects, necessary revolution. Any attempt to overthrow him must by definition be counter revolutionary, and would at least bring into question many of the popular reforms, including distribution of land, which he has carried out."¹⁷³

In the end Batista was ousted by a hostile population rather than by a superior enemy force.¹⁷⁴ The will to resist was so low in Batista's forces, and the regime so decayed, that it collapsed before Castro even initiated the final phase of direct confrontation.¹⁷⁵ Sanger cites as an example of the low morale of the Cuban Army an incident where Castro paid \$200,000 to a post commander for the surrender of his entire garrison.¹⁷⁶

Thus, all the basic considerations for the revolution existed in Cuba. Popular support was obtained through the interaction of cause, outside support, and the catalyst. An examination of this last element has been delayed until now because of the unique impact of Castro's revolution on the revolutionary warfare element of leadership.

The majority of the more recent examples of insurgency have had as their catalysts an organization in which the armed element carries out the directives of a separate and superior political apparatus. In Malaya, the Philippines, Indochina, China, and Algeria, the political decision-making organization directed the armed insurgents to conduct those operations deemed necessary for the achievement of specified political goals. In addition, supervision was maintained by political advisors located at subordinate unit levels to maintain liaison and insure that political directives were being adhered to and internal political solidarity was maintained. In the Cuban example, this relationship between the civilian leadership element and a responsive military arm did not exist. In the Cuban example, the vanguard of the revolution was not a political party nor a political organization, but the armed insurgents themselves. Because there was no effective political organization to counter Batista, the guerrillas developed their own. This is the prime argument used to support Castroism's deviation from the "traditional approach" to revolutionary struggle.

The roots of Castroism can be traced historically to the Latin American Revolutionary tradition and to Cuba's thirty years of experience in its War of Independence.¹⁷⁷ The experience of the armed guerrilla in the Sierra is repeated in much of Latin American's history. The capital city is the ultimate target, but this only falls when the rest of the country is supporting the Revolutionaries. The beginning takes place among the rural population and ends with the entire political and military apparatus in the hands of the guerrillas.¹⁷⁸ "In Cuba it was not the party that was the directive nucleus of the popular army as it had been in Vietnam according to Giap; it was rather the rebel Army that was the leading nucleus of the party. The nucleus that created Moncada was the nucleus of the rebel army which is in turn the nucleus of the party. The guerrilla force is the party in embryo."¹⁷⁹

In China, Russia, and Indochina, the party leadership was tested and molded by struggle: in the USSR by the imperialist interventions of 1918 to 1920, in China by the Japanese, in Indochina by the Japanese and the French.¹⁸⁰ The development of these struggles coincides with orthodox Marxist-Leninist theory that only the party can determine the political content and the goal to be pursued.¹⁸¹ Because Latin American parties were not so tested, they developed in a different way.¹⁸² In 1930 the formation of "United Fronts" became the Communist Party Line. For these parties this meant political action and alliances with other groups in order to achieve political goals,¹⁸³ and often included alliances with the national bourgeoisie. Draper describes Castro as much more radical than even the Chinese leadership who acknowledge the necessity of cooperation with the national bourgeoisie. Castro destroyed this group in Cuba in 1960.¹⁸⁴

Armed struggle was never completely renounced as an alternative by the parties, but as time passed it sank lower on the list of possible alternatives.¹⁸⁵ Survival became the main consideration even if requiring cooperation with other groups. For the Communist Parties, armed insurrection

became viewed as "somewhat sacrilegious temptation, a kind of adventurism perennially premature--a danger."¹⁸⁶ In Cuba, for example, the Communist Party called for strikes, demonstrations . . . civic protests of every kind. It advocated a democratic front of national liberation composed of the workers, the peasants, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie under the leadership of the proletariat.¹⁸⁷ For Castro and the 26 July Movement, the question was ultimately not if to use force but when.¹⁸⁸ By taking up arms against Batista, the armed insurrection became the foco of the revolution.

The Cuban Communist Party was an embarrassed and very late entry into the anti-Batista struggle.¹⁸⁹ The party was for a long time in disagreement with the methods and tactics of the 26 July Movement. It deplored the terrorism and sabotage Castro was encouraging.¹⁹⁰ The guerrillas developed the necessary political awareness to secure popular support without a formal political apparatus. In short, they replaced the Party as the vanguard.¹⁹¹

As with Mao, Castro came to believe the armed revolution itself was the "university" in which the guerrilla fighters are schooled and that the war develops its own lessons and principles.¹⁹² Che wrote "actual combat, not theory, makes guerrillas, combat forges an ideologist as well as fighter," with social consciences as well as military skills.¹⁹³ Debray also adds "the cadres of the mass armed struggle will be those who participate in it and who in the field prove their ability as its leaders." He thus denies the hallowed principle of organizational distinction between the military and the political arms.¹⁹⁴ These rural revolutionaries, largely from the middle class,¹⁹⁵ evolved into rural proletarians and came to think like a dispossessed class.¹⁹⁶ They developed a set of unorthodox ideas and ultimately became the flagbearers of the revolution.¹⁹⁷ The combination of the rural environment in which they fought, the camaraderie of the Sierra, the tactical necessities and the political action required to insure popular support--all contributed to the selection of the proper courses of action and resulted ultimately in success. This experience "proved" that Castro's method was the proper one.¹⁹⁸ Sinclair supports this contention. "The fighting of a war of liberation will teach the guerrillas whatever doctrine is the right one for them. Revolution feeds upon itself."¹⁹⁹ Regis Debray who succeeded Che as Castro's systematic thinker,²⁰⁰ maintained that the Communist Party could not lead because it was tied to the city.²⁰¹ Debray in building a case for the rural foco notes "the city remains petty bourgeoisie. It contains future traitors among its leaders and is very much influenced by the milieu in which it develops."²⁰² He warns that any subordination of the rural forces, who are doing the actual fighting, to the city leadership results in logistical and military dependence and often leads to abandonment of the guerrillas.²⁰³ For Guevara, the key in Latin America was a rural-based revolution whose objectives must include agricultural reform.²⁰⁴ Whether the lack of success of anti-Batista efforts in urban areas may have altered Che's thinking, or

merely reinforced an earlier conviction, is not clear. Che, in his introduction to Giap's People's War--People's Army, wrote that the Cuban movement unknowingly followed the same road as Mao's revolution.²⁰⁵ (He contradicts himself in an interview in 1959 with the statement "Mao was widely read" and "Mao was studied as food from China and Mao was a great help to us.")²⁰⁶ Until the failure of the general strike in April 1958, there are indications that Castro believed that rural guerrilla action was an indispensable but subordinate tactic in the struggle.²⁰⁷ Castro advocated a combination of urban and rural struggle, until the strike failed.²⁰⁸ These urban groups were notoriously prone to counterattack by government forces, and they ultimately failed.²⁰⁹ The failure of the strike coincided with a failure of Batista's offensive against the Sierra-based guerrillas. This combination accelerated the shift in emphasis to Castro in the hills and away from the urban centers.²¹⁰ Sinolair also notes the similarity of the Chinese experience where the insurgents tried to obtain a decision in the urban area, failed, went rural and finally won from an agrarian reformist position. The Chinese, too, substituted the peasants for the urban proletariat.²¹¹ With the decision to achieve revolution from a primarily rural foco, all support in the anti-Batista struggle was diverted to the Sierra,²¹² and to the Sierra fell the ultimate rewards of the revolution. In summarizing the Cuban guerrilla warfare experience, Che proposes three fundamental lessons: (1) popular forces can win a war against the army; (2) it is not necessary to wait until all the conditions for making a revolution exist, the insurrection itself can create them; (3) in the underdeveloped Americas, the countryside is the base for armed fighting.²¹³ Mao also noted that the peasantry constitutes the principal revolutionary force in agrarian countries.²¹⁴ Debray, echoing the Cuban experience, said, "The most decisive political choice is membership in . . . the armed forces of the liberation, thus gradually this small army creates rank and file unity among all parties as it grows and wins its first victories. Eventually the future peoples army will beget the part of which it is to be theoretically an instrument. Essentially the party is the army."²¹⁵

Castro's experience is outlined as follows: he set up a rural base, he cooperated with urban leadership until urban action failed, he then expanded and strengthened the rural foco; he isolated the cities from the population and won the revolution.²¹⁶ Castroism, therefore, has come to mean rural armed struggle. Armed struggle for the Cuban Communist Party was simply a tactical question; for Castro, it was the raison d'etre.²¹⁷ Castroism now presented a challenge to Communist Party leadership in Latin America.²¹⁸ Castro had little success, however, in convincing the older Latin American Communist leadership that armed struggle was the only road to success.²¹⁹ Only in Venezuela and Guatemala were there shifts toward the Castro methodology,²²⁰ while elsewhere Castroism threatened the parties with factional splits.²²¹

The Communist Parties of Latin America remained loyal to their previous line which follows the lead of the USSR. In national spheres, as well as in the world arena, the theme was and is coexistence. An example of the type

of warning given to Latin American Communist Parties and to Cuba is quoted from Kommunist, the Soviet party theoretical journal. "Tactics of partisan warfare cannot be transferred to countries where, in the last few years, the people have overthrown the military police dictatorship and coming /sic/ to power on a wave of revolutionary development, democracy and progress."²²² In contrast, Castro, Che, and Debray indicated that what had been done in Cuba could be done elsewhere--anywhere--whatever the odds. Revolutionaries must not pay heed to traditional Communist Parties or to other leftwing elements who harp about the right time and conditions, but never get on with the actual business of trying to seize power. Che advised revolutionaries to forget about the parties, the doctrines, the theories. The ingredients for victory according to Che were a few men, a few guns, his manual, and a determination to win. Neither initial popular support nor a well planned doctrine was really necessary. If the country was poor enough, the people would support the guerrillas as soon as the guerrillas began to operate. This was the basic difference between Castroism and the Party and it is still the question of whether or not armed struggle is a viable option that divides the revolutionary elements in Latin America.

PART II

CHAPTER VII

CHE'S BOLIVIAN ADVENTURE

Today, to the South American Continent, Castro is merely a Cuban revolutionary who pulled off his own revolution. Che surpasses him in influences as soon as one leaves Cuba where the Argentine, since his disappearance has been forgotten, subjected to more than a little criticism and even detested. It was this ghost of Che that the Russians feared the most, the ghost of this mysterious intransigent revolutionary who refused to come to terms with reality. This Spaniard, this son of Iberian Anarchist federations who claimed that everything great comes about through disorder.¹

In order to understand the events that occurred in Bolivia in 1967, a brief examination of the key figure is necessary. The second man to join Castro, then in exile in Mexico, was Dr. Ernesto "Che" Guevara.² Che, an Argentine doctor, had witnessed Arbenz' failure in Guatemala, had studied Marx and Lenin at the University of Mexico, and had become convinced of the necessity for armed struggle.³ In December of 1956, he sailed for Cuba from Mexico on the Granma with Fidel and Raul Castro. Because of his medical ability, he began as a medic for the guerrillas. By the end of the revolution, he was leading a separate guerrilla column against Batista. He had chosen to play an active combat role rather than one of a doctor. (Che's description of the dramatic episode in which this choice was made can be found in his Episodes of the Revolutionary War.)⁴

With the success of the revolution, Che became president of the National Bank and chief of the Cuban economy.⁵ He eliminated from the Cuban economy all those officials who were not Marxists. "An exponent of rapid and brutal solutions, he socialized Cuba in one stroke."⁶

A glimpse of Che's character is illustrated in the following incident. In charge of the execution of Batista supporters at LaCavana, Che was watching the proceedings from a balcony. One Batista official was taking his time about dying because the job had been badly done. One of the execution squad asked if the coup de grace should be administered. "No," Che answered, "the pobreito has already lost enough blood."⁷

Che established control over the stock exchange and a monopoly over imports and exports. He did away with private enterprise, nationalizing and regrouping all businesses. He wanted to industrialize the island even though it lacked both power sources and raw material and was essentially most fit for sugar production and agriculture. It was a catastrophe from which Cuba has not yet recovered.⁸ (Che's theory of values has been

defined by one writer according to moral and social worth: spiritual wants first, material needs second.⁹) Sinolair wrote, "Che was caught up in a continuous series of errors. Brilliant as a theoretician, remarkable as a guerrilla leader, he had neither the qualities of an administrator nor the skill and sense of compromise of a real politician."¹⁰ In 1964 Che wrote an article of self-criticism acknowledging his error of trying to diversify the economy too rapidly.¹¹ In 1965 the Cuban government reemphasized economic incentives and decentralization, calling that year the "Year of Agriculture."¹²

At about the same time, Che had begun to reexamine the contradiction between Communism and Capitalism. He came to the conclusion that the struggle was not between East and West but rather between the developed and underdeveloped.¹³ In a speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations, Che hinted that he was losing faith with the Communist policy. He said, "... peaceful coexistence among nations does not include coexistence between exploiter and the exploited, the oppressor and the oppressed."¹⁴ He openly attacked Soviet policy at the Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference held in Algiers in February of 1965.¹⁵ Thoroughly dissatisfied with the Soviet performance during the Cuban Missile Crisis, Che became convinced that the Soviets were more inclined to use rockets in their own interest than in support of a world revolution. Nor had there been any positive action by the Russians in support of the Dominican uprising. The Communist Parties of Latin America were dutifully following the coexistence line. Che's earlier experience with the "stand pat" attitude of the Communists had given him a strong bias against the traditional Marxist-Leninist dogma of the uprising led by the urban proletariat.¹⁶ While Fidel Castro was totally engaged in the Cuban Revolution, Che was preoccupied with extending the struggle to Latin America and to the whole world.¹⁷ Castro was being pressured to get rid of Che as quickly as possible.¹⁸ It was time for Che to leave.

Che told Fidel he wanted to go away and start the liberation of Latin America from the central part of Bolivia.¹⁹ What Che hoped to achieve was revealed in his message to the Tri-Continental Solidarity Organization released in April of 1967. He hoped to create two or three more Vietnams in the Americas and thus strain the resources of the primary adversary, the United States, as well as to aid Vietnam.²⁰ He envisioned United States military advisors as being replaced by United States combat units in increasingly greater numbers.²¹ For Che, thirty to fifty armed men were sufficient to initiate an insurgency.²² The purpose of the guerrilla foco was not to create a revolution but to create the conditions for a revolution. Che believed by inserting a group of guerrillas into an already explosive political situation these conditions could be created.²³

In November of 1966 Che arrived in Bolivia using the alias of Dr. Adolfo Mena Gonzales. With a forged passport and OAS credentials, he was to study the economic and social relationships in the Bolivian countryside.²⁴ Che

was met by Jorge Vasquez, a Bolivian Communist Party militant and two companions. This group traveled by road to Lagunillas, a decaying cattle town in southeastern Bolivia. From there the group went on to a farm near the Nancahuasu River.²⁵ This farm, or finca, had been purchased by Coco Paredo, another Bolivian, prior to Che's arrival.²⁶ In the months after his arrival, Che was joined by seventeen Cubans, some of them from the old Sierra days. Of this group, four were Commandantes, the highest rank in the Cuban Army, and four were members of the Cuban Central Committee.²⁷

In March, during one of the training and reconnaissance exercises, the guerrillas led by Marcos, one of the Cubans, stopped at a house to buy food. (The guerrillas with Che used single code names rather than their own names. See Annex A.) The owner, Epifaino Vargas, was an employee of the government-owned oil company. He did not believe their story about being geologists and followed them. After losing their trail, he continued to Camiri and reported the incident to the authorities.²⁸

While Che and most of the others were still out, an early recruit, Vincente Rocabado, having spent three weeks with the guerrillas, deserted. He was apprehended by Bolivian authorities on March 11, 1967, and another deserter, a man named Choque-Choque, was picked up on March 17. The latter confirmed Rocabado's story and agreed to act as a guide for the Bolivian Army.²⁹ The Army, following up the deserter's information, patrolled in the vicinity of the finca and fought a minor action with the guerrillas. On March 20, when Che was returning to the base, he found the guerrillas in the process of abandoning the camp. He quickly reorganized the group and set out ambushes around the base camp. On March 23, Vargas and the army patrol he was guiding fell into one of these ambushes. Vargas and an officer were killed, and the wounded prisoners were treated and released.³⁰ Most of the guerrillas' equipment was quickly hidden, but, despite the apparent danger to security, Che remained in the base for eleven more days.³¹

While Che had been away, another development of importance had occurred. Regis Debray, a French Marxist, and an Argentine journalist, Roberto Bustos, were brought to Nancahuasu for interviews. Debray asked to join the guerrillas but was refused.³² Debray and Bustos were directed to return to the outside to inform the world of Che's presence and of the aims of the revolution.³³ Debray and Bustos were escorted by the guerrillas to Muyupampa to make their way out. They were picked up by Bolivian authorities, however, and denounced by one of the deserters who had seen them in the Nancahuasu camp.³⁴ Debray's capture and subsequent trial brought the international press to the scene, and President DeGaulle asked President Barrientos for clemency for Debray.³⁵

In the early contacts with the guerrillas, the Bolivian soldiers had fared badly. The Bolivian Army recruits came partly from the Altiplano. They were described as "a sorry looking collection of soldiers badly trained and equipped, without traditions, understaffed, and of more than uncertain morale."³⁶ Despite the success of the early ambushes, the guerrillas were

not yet prepared to begin a major campaign. They were still few in number, their contacts with the political organizations in the city were in a rudimentary form, and they were all completely exhausted from their earlier training marches.³⁷ The news of the ambushes of March 23, together with that of Che's presence, was released by Barrientos, thereby identifying from the outset the foreign leadership of the guerrillas.³⁸ With the release of the news of the guerrilla activity also came a Bolivian request to the United States for heavy military equipment.³⁹ Whether the U.S. ever seriously considered deploying heavy equipment or combat troops to Bolivia is unknown. The option that was selected was the deployment of a Mobile Training Team of U.S. Army Special Forces--"Green Berets"--to Bolivia under the command of Major Ralph "Pappy" Shelton.⁴⁰ Major Shelton and his team of experts organized and presented a nineteen-week training program to a Bolivian Ranger unit. This training took place at La Esperanza, a deserted sugar mill north of Santa Cruz.⁴¹ Che greeted the news of the arrival of Shelton's team as the first episode of a new Vietnam. He wrote, "It seems certain that the Americans will intervene here in strength."⁴²

The guerrillas finally abandoned their camp on April 3, leaving a detachment in the vicinity to keep up activity.⁴³ With the remainder, Che moved south to escort the journalists out. The stay-behind group included Joaquin, Tania, Alejandro, two other Cubans, two Peruvians, and ten Bolivians, many of the group too sick to make the march.⁴⁴ When a Bolivian Army patrol entered the abandoned camp the following day it found a hospital, an armory, a kitchen built to feed forty to fifty men, and several documents, including a speech by Guevara and a picture of Che.⁴⁵

Che and twenty-seven other guerrillas spent most of the months of April and May looking for Joaquin's group with which contact had been lost.⁴⁶ They decided to continue the search north of the Rio Grande and on June 10 crossed the river. The following day there was a clash with an Army patrol and on June 19, they entered Moroccho and occupied that village. Continuing north, the guerrillas clashed with another Army patrol at Perey on June 26. In that action one soldier was killed and two were wounded. The guerrillas' casualties were one killed and one wounded.⁴⁷ After the Perey action, Che moved the guerrillas to the northwest and on July 6, they entered Las Cuevas on the Cochabamba--Santa Cruz Highway. They tapped the telephone line and overheard the alert order being given to the government troops in Samaipata. The guerrillas commandeered a bus, arrived in Samaipata shortly after midnight, and captured the small garrison while it was in the process of issuing ammunition to the troops.⁴⁸ The action at Samaipata was a great publicity coup. Shelton said the news caused quite a stir in Santa Cruz and in the other cities of Bolivia.⁴⁹ This contributed to the closing of the borders with Argentina and Peru.⁵⁰ The guerrillas, after obtaining what supplies were available, moved off to the south. By July 19, they were in El Filo, and, on July 27, contact was made with an Army patrol at El Duran resulting in a Bolivian soldier and a civilian guide killed. On July 30, still farther to the south, another action resulted in four

soldiers killed in action and six wounded. The guerrillas lost two killed and one wounded. In this action, the guerrillas left ten ruck-sacks behind.⁵¹ These contained a large quantity of undeveloped photos, documents, and other equipment.⁵² As a result of these captured photos, the Bolivian authorities were able to uncover and completely destroy the urban net that had been established by Tania and the treasurer of the guerrillas' urban organization.⁵³

More immediately damaging to the guerrillas' operations was the desertion of two Bolivian Indians from Joaquin's group. When captured they revealed the locations of the caves in which the guerrillas had cached their supplies and equipment prior to departing from the Nancahuasu camp.⁵⁴

Che had earlier made the following observation about logistics in guerrilla warfare: "A very important consideration is supplies. In general, the zones of difficult access present special problems since there are few peasants and, therefore, animal and food supplies are scarce. It is necessary to maintain stable lines of communication in order to be able always to count on a minimum of food stockpiled in the event of any disagreeable development."⁵⁵

Without supplies it was obvious to Che that uniting with Joaquin's group was critical. Joaquin's group, now also north of the Rio Grande, had reached the river on August 30. That day they had captured three "peasants." These three were in reality soldiers in disguise, one of whom had escaped, walked to LaLaja, and warned the garrison.⁵⁶ Joaquin planned to recross the river the next day and Honorato Rojas, a farmer living in the vicinity, was asked to point out a crossing site. Rojas passed this information on to the Army which in turn prepared an ambush.⁵⁷ After waiting most of the day, their patience was rewarded. At dusk the guerrilla point-man crossed the river and waved the rest across. When the guerrillas were all in the middle of the river, the soldiers opened fire. There were no survivors.

Che arrived at the river the next day, but the activity in the area caused him to turn west. On September 24, the group entered Alto Seco. They cut the phone lines (already out for weeks) and conducted a political meeting in the village school. Che and Inti spoke at length, but there were no volunteers to join the guerrillas.⁵⁸ The guerrillas moved on, and on September 26 there was a skirmish with an Army patrol in the vicinity of Higuera in which two guerrillas, including Coco Perado were killed. By now the guerrillas were in need of rest. Many, including Che, were too sick to walk. They remained in the vicinity of Higuera until October 8.

By now the guerrillas were dealing with specialists in guerrilla warfare.⁵⁹ Their training at La Esperanza completed, the Second Ranger Battalion was now in the field.⁶⁰ The guerrillas were flushed from their canyon camp on the morning of October 8. Leaving six men behind as a rear guard, Che with the rest tried to get out of the bottom of the canyon where

it flowed into the Rio Grande. Che was wounded and captured along with Willie, a Bolivian.⁶¹ Captain Gary Prado, Commanding Officer of Company C, Second Ranger Battalion, confirmed Che's capture by radio.

Of the remaining guerrillas, three were killed that morning, two more on October 9, and four on October 14.⁶² The Rangers thus accounted for all but six of Che's group. Five of the six men left in the rear guard were the only ones to survive. Nato was killed on November 15 near Mataral. The remainder made it safely to Chile a few months later. This author was in the operational area in January and February of 1968 with a Bolivian paratroop unit searching for the remaining five fugitives. In February we received word the guerrillas were twenty miles ahead. The next day it was reported that the five had crossed into Chile 300 kilometers away. A farmer reported that the Bolivians had been disarmed and were being kept separated and watched by the Cubans.

Che was evacuated by helicopter to La Higuera. Lieutenant Espanoso talked at length with Che and, although Che did not reveal any pertinent information, Espanoso felt a high regard for Che as a soldier and as a man and was anxious to know more about this legendary figure. Che answered all his questions with "perhaps" or "possibly." Early in the morning on October 9, 1967, the unit received the order to execute Che and the other captive. Colonel Santana had earlier given express orders that the two prisoners were to be kept alive. Upon receiving the execution order, and believing that it may have come from the highest authority, Captain Prado gave the order to Second Lieutenant Perez who in turn passed the order on to Sergeant Terran of Company B, Second Ranger Battalion, for implementation. Perez asked Che if he wished anything before his execution. Che replied that he only wished to die with a full stomach. Perez then asked Che if he were a materialist, since he requested only food. Che replied "quizas" (perhaps). Perez called him a poor shit /sio/ and left. Sergeant Terran, fortified with several beers, entered and Che stood up and said, "I know what you have come for and I am ready." Terran replied, "No you are mistaken, be seated." Terran then left. Willie, held in a house a few meters away was executed by Sergeant Ruacka. Che, on hearing the burst of fire, for the first time appeared frightened. As Sergeant Terran reentered, Che stood and faced the Sergeant who again told him to sit down. Che said, "No, I will remain standing for this." Terran became angry and again told him to sit down. Che said "Know this now, you are killing a man." Terran thereupon fired a burst from his M2 carbine and killed Guevara.⁶³ At one o'clock in the afternoon word was released that Che was dead, and at 5 p.m. the body was brought to Vallegrande for viewing by the press.⁶⁴

This writer discussed at great length with Captain Prado, and the other Bolivians involved, the reason for the execution order. They said the Debray trial, with all the press coverage, had given the Bolivians a great deal of difficulty. Every aspect of Bolivian life was made public property. The poverty and the backwardness of the country were exposed to the

world, and as a result the Bolivians had been ridiculed by the press. It was, therefore, not surprising to them that, rather than have another trial and public spectacle, the execution was ordered.

CHAPTER VIII

OUTSIDE SUPPORT--ANALYSIS

. . . The Cubans are not reluctant to provide the burgeoning movements with political advice, guerrilla handbooks, funds and even weapons from their immense Soviet supplied arsenal.⁶⁵

At a rate of 100 per month, Cuba trained Latin American guerrillas in the school at Minas de Frio in Oriente province.⁶⁶

Code named "Leche" ("Milk"), the guerrilla support mechanism in Bolivia was directed from Cuba.⁶⁷ This contention is supported by Larteguy when he notes that in one of the first contacts between the Bolivians of the Camari area and Che's group it was noted that the guerrillas were in radio contact using a large transmitter.⁶⁸

Mario Monje, Secretary General of the Bolivian Communist Party, had visited Cuba in 1966 and was given \$25,000 for the purpose of promoting a Bolivian revolution.⁶⁹ Fidel Castro controlled the purse strings.⁷⁰ During the preparatory stage which lasted until Che's arrival in Bolivia, Castro provided money, equipment, and personnel for the guerrillas.⁷¹ After Che's arrival, the support continued, although it was much more difficult to maintain it after the government forces had cordoned off the guerrilla operational area. The personnel support that Cuba provided included the pick of the Cubans to accompany Che on his "Adventure."⁷²

Future cooperation with the Peruvian Communists was also in the plan. Cuban trained Peruvians were to take part in the initial Bolivian stages, and, as the movement progressed, the Peruvians and selected Cubans were to be withdrawn from Bolivia to begin operations in Peru. Cuba's support was to continue through this stage.⁷³ It was envisioned that as focos were established in the adjacent countries, mutual support would then be possible. The overall objective was the seizure of power in one or more countries in South America.⁷⁴ Che quickly realized that the Bolivian foco alone could not carry out a successful revolution.⁷⁵ To gain additional support, Bustos and Debray were enlisted. Their mission was to try to enlist support in other Latin American countries, and on the world propaganda level as well.⁷⁶ For the initial Bolivian effort, Castro's Cuba was the prime sponsor.

CAUSE

There appeared to be no shortage of causes necessary for successful guerrilla movement in Bolivia. Che saw Bolivia as a logical location for the establishment of an armed foco. The Bolivian economic situation was the most difficult in Latin America.⁷⁷ The nationalized tin mines were dominated by organized labor and were inefficient and plagued with "featherbedding."⁷⁸ Although the miners, numbering upwards of 40,000 during times of normal operation in the mines, only constituted 4 percent of the Bolivian labor force, they were powerful out of all proportion due to the influence of tin on Bolivian exports.⁷⁹ Attempts to diversify the economy by encouraging cattle ranching, sugar planting, and oil development were hampered by the refusal of the Bolivian Indians to come down from the Altiplano to work in the lowlands.⁸⁰ Poverty and hunger in the highlands were endemic, and the paucity of roads compounded the problem. These conditions led Che to believe that the population would be receptive to revolution and that the lack of roads would hinder any government counter-guerrilla operations.⁸¹

Other factors which influenced Che included the high illiteracy rate (70 percent) and the fighting spirit of the people as exemplified by the 1952 Bolivian Revolution. Che saw the military government of Barrientos and Ovando as a two-headed Batista that could be overthrown by applying the same techniques that had worked in Cuba.⁸² Also important was the geographic advantage of Bolivia. One look at the map convinced Che that, once in motion, the movement could easily spread to Argentina, Brazil, Peru, and Paraguay.⁸³ Debray wrote, "Bolivia presents an excellent opportunity for guerrilla action. . ."⁸⁴ and "Bolivia is a country where the subjective and objective conditions are best combined. It is the only country in South America where a Socialist Revolution is on the agenda."⁸⁵ "No South American country is worse conditioned /sic/ than Bolivia to face guerrilla warfare."⁸⁶

While in the Sierra Maestra, long before Che actually started his Bolivian "Adventure," he had envisioned Bolivia as a possible site.

I've got a plan.

If some day I have to carry the revolution to the continent, I will set myself up in the selva at the frontier between Bolivia and Brazil. I know the spot pretty well because I was there as a doctor. From there it is possible to put pressure on three or four countries and, by taking advantage of the frontiers and the forests, you can work things so as never to be caught.⁸⁷

THE CATALYST

Whether these causes, as Che saw them, possessed the magnitude required to insure success depended largely on the ability of a catalyst to mobilize popular support. A major breakdown occurred in the catalyst operation in Bolivia. The basic differences between the approaches of Che and Castro and the traditional Communist Party approach to armed insurrection resulted in a breakdown of cooperation between the two. Mario Monje, in his talk with Castro, had expressed his concern for any attempt to organize a guerrilla movement in Bolivia while bypassing the political committee. He pointed out to Castro the need for Bolivians to run their own revolution.⁸⁸ At this meeting, Che's role in the coming struggle was not revealed.⁸⁹ Castro did state that "a comrade whom we both know to be a good revolutionary would pass through Bolivia on his way to his own country" and he asked Monje to help him.⁹⁰ Castro pledged to Monje continued assistance, and promised not to get mixed up in the internal affairs of Bolivia.⁹¹ The sincerity of Castro's pledge may have been genuine at the time, as the original plans envisioned the establishment of several guerrilla movements, including insurgency activities in Peru and Argentina. These plans were changed when the Peruvian guerrillas were destroyed in early 1966.⁹² The Argentine plan was abandoned sometime between May and July of 1967.⁹³ Bolivia was now to be the first foco in the Pan-American guerrilla front.

The Bolivian network was still in its infancy and contacts with political supporting elements were almost nonexistent when Che arrived.⁹⁴ Moises Guevara, a leader in the Oruro mining area, was contacted by Che on orders from Cuba.⁹⁵ Moises Guevara agreed to provide recruits for the armed guerrillas in the Camiri, but the Bolivian Communist party remained hostile to any kind of armed struggle. In December, Monje finally met with Che in the Nancahuasu Camp to see if some understanding could be reached. This historic meeting marked the final rejection of the applicability of the Cuban experience, at least for Bolivia.⁹⁶ Monje said he would resign from the Party, that he would keep the party neutral in the struggle, and that he would be the political and military leader as long as the struggle took place in Bolivia. He would handle relationships with other South American guerrillas and try to enlist their support.⁹⁷ Che had no objection to his resignation nor to wider established liaison, but on the second point, leadership, there could be no compromise. Che adamantly refused to consider any shift in leadership.

Che lacked the subtlety of the politician, and he thus alienated the Bolivian party mechanism. Che would lead the insurrection without party support.⁹⁸ Monje then talked to the Bolivians in the camp, all of whom opted to remain with Che.⁹⁹ Che wrote, "Monje's attitude can slow down our development on one side, but it may contribute on the other, by freeing one from any political compromise."¹⁰⁰ In January, however, he wrote "The party is taking up arms against us."¹⁰¹ Moises Guevara was now the only source of support to Che in Bolivia, and he agreed to allow his group to be

absorbed into the guerrilla movement.¹⁰² By cutting off all of the contacts with the Party, Che was unable to secure any additional recruits or support. Gott notes that Lechin's miners were ready and willing to provide support but were unable to help. These miners, a most volatile group, had staged an uprising in the mines in June and July to which President Barrientos responded with military occupation.¹⁰³ The problem remained, however, that this group was unable to make direct contact with Che. (Debray testified at his trial that no messengers ever came to the base from La Paz.) Che's strictness of not permitting anyone from the guerrillas to go to the "Llanos" prevented any establishment of liaison with the cities.¹⁰⁴ Bustos said that the Bolivians who had already joined were to carry out the task of establishing contacts with the population and they would profit from the results of the publicity.¹⁰⁵ It is obvious that with the prohibition of any outside contacts with the cities, vigorous recruiting efforts within the guerrilla operational area by the guerrillas themselves were necessary. This is consistent with Castro's experience in the Cuban Sierra. The Bolivian Communist Party officially stated at the time of the outbreak of fighting that the "present situation does not fundamentally change the line and aims of the Bolivian Communist Party."¹⁰⁶ In June, Che tried one last time to contact the party by sending a messenger to Cochabamba, but there were no results.¹⁰⁷ The deep and disastrous division between Che and the Party precluded effective recruitment outside the immediate area at a time when the guerrillas needed the Party for manpower.¹⁰⁸

Larteguy summarizes the division between the Castroites and Communists in this exchange. The Castroites advocated the revolution first. "Let's set up guerrilla bands everywhere, two, three, several Viet Nams. From these guerrilla forces armies will be born and from these armies authentically revolutionary governments such as that of Mao Tse Tung in China will be established." "Adventurism--adventuristic reasoning" was the Communist reaction. "Revolution is a serious affair that must be carefully prepared. The guerrillas can have real importance only if they are supported by an ideology, the apparatus of the party, the unions and the trained and organized masses."¹⁰⁹ The early life of a guerrilla band obviously depends on the help given them by the urban underground.¹¹⁰ "In Bolivia it was precisely this lack of support from the city that prevented Che from transforming the countryside into the battleground he envisioned."¹¹¹

In summary, Che's six points for armed insurrection in Bolivia and the rest of Latin America were as follows:

1. He envisioned a revolution on a continental scale, using Bolivia as a base of operations for the spreading of the struggle into adjacent areas.
2. He considered all of Latin America as having a similar revolutionary potential.

3. He believed the Cuban pattern was applicable to all of Latin America.
4. He advocated neutrality in the face of the Sino-Soviet split.
5. He believed the revolution should be in the hands of the military; i.e., the rebel army and not the party apparatus.
6. He believed he could take advantage of existing conditions in order to create revolution.¹¹²

Castroism, Che's guiding philosophy, was to try to spread through Latin America an original revolutionary movement refusing all allegiance to either the Russian or the Chinese theses. His movement wanted to draw its inspiration from a single experience realized under exceptional conditions--that of Fidel Castro.¹¹³ Debray's statement summarizes this position: "The people's army will be the nucleus of the party, not vice versa. That is, the guerrilla force must be developed if the political vanguard is to be developed. Stress must be on the development of guerrilla warfare and not on strengthening the existing parties, nor the creation of new parties. Insurrectional activity is today the number one political activity."¹¹⁴ Che said, "Our brothers in Latin America are in the same economic position as ourselves, and should take up the armed insurrection. This must be an agrarian revolution, with fighting in the countryside and in the mountains. The revolution must be taken from there to the cities and not started in the cities without overall social content."¹¹⁵

POPULAR SUPPORT

In his first visit to Bolivia as a doctor, Che found it impossible to communicate "in any human way with the Indians."¹¹⁶ This situation was not much improved in 1967. This was because Che could offer them nothing except revolution for revolution's sake. By 1952, the upper classes had fled; the army had been disbanded, and, by means of enfranchisement and agrarian reform, large numbers of Indians, the predominant element in the population, had been brought into the framework of modern Bolivian society.¹¹⁷ The largest estates were broken up and the individual peasant families had been given the land.¹¹⁸ By 1967, almost 300,000 new titles involving approximately 8,000,000 hectares of land had been issued.¹¹⁹ Along with these land reforms had come support from the United States. At the behest of Milton Eisenhower, who visited Bolivia in 1953, extensive United States aid had been extended to Bolivia. The United States State Department was to make the distinction that, although the Bolivian Revolution was Marxist, it was non-Communist--a rarity during the John Foster Dulles years.¹²⁰

By 1966, the Bolivian economy had, in general, improved. The tin mines, despite the strikes, were operating at a profit for the first time since 1952.¹²¹ One of the juniors of the 1952 revolution, and now President, was Rene Barrientos who received sixty-one percent of the votes in what foreign observers had termed "an honest election." General Barrientos and General Ovando had continued the revolutionary trend in their country since 1964.¹²² Both Barrientos and Ovando were products of the 1952 Revolution, and Che deluded himself in equating Barrientos and Ovando to Batista.¹²³ "Despite Barrientos' share of mistakes, the fact remains that he offered a revolutionary program that was popular with the people and thus undercut any appeal that Che Guevara might otherwise have expected. In particular, Barrientos enjoyed immense popularity among precisely the segment Che deemed most essential to his own success, the peasantry."¹²⁴ "The old army had been dissolved after the 1952 revolution, but the new government had fabricated another army out of the victorious revolutionary forces that had fought against machine guns with sticks of dynamite wrapped in steel bolts and strung wire."¹²⁵ In 1967 the Bolivian Army did not appear to be much of a threat. It was composed mainly of one-year recruits. It had never won a war in its history but had lost three. Through 152 years of independence, 55 different administrations, and 150 congresses, the Bolivian Army merely reflected the country as being one of the poorest and least developed in Latin America.¹²⁶ When the guerrilla outbreak began, almost none of the troops had received counterinsurgency training.¹²⁷ But the Bolivian Army went in heavily for civic action. They performed tangible works that benefitted numerous rural villages, and in many cases conscripts came from the same villages that had been helped by civic action units. This gave the army a "progressive" image which belied the Communist propaganda calling it reactionary and a tool of the oligarchy.¹²⁸ The Bolivian Army was, in short, a people's army, and that was what Che was up against.

Despite the fact that Che's guerrillas paid for the things they took, and despite the medical care they provided,¹²⁹ the population viewed Che's group with suspicion.¹³⁰ Che indicated that it was preferable for a guerrilla to be an inhabitant of his own country since he would have friends who would help him. Further, the guerrilla would have knowledge of the ground--an invaluable asset.¹³¹

Che's guerrilla force included his Cuban cohorts, students from La Paz, and a few miners from Oruro. The force was established in a zone where it was unknown, and as a result the population viewed the group as foreigners and supported the Army.¹³² Since 1953 the Santa Cruz-Camiri area has become the key to Bolivia's future.¹³³ In this area natural gas and oil have been discovered.¹³⁴ To compound Che's problems, the Camiri-Rio Grande area had been a military area since the time of the Chaco War. The local population had become accustomed to the military, hence were not hostile to them.¹³⁵

Another area that was considered briefly by the guerrillas was the Beni, a much more logical consideration for a potential guerrilla foco. Osborne dated the exploitation of the Beni for the benefit of the Altiplano from the time of the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767. "It is a sad record of maladministration, irresponsibility and corruption, and is a private Siberia for political prisoners."¹³⁶ The historic conflict between the Beni and LaPaz made the Beni the "Sierra Maestra" of Bolivia. The Peredo brothers were from the Beni and because of the accessibility of Peru from that area it was a more logical choice than Camiri.¹³⁷ The one area that might have proved more fertile ground was at the other end of the country and although briefly considered was not ultimately selected as a foco for the Bolivian Revolution. Even when arguing for Camiri as a possible area for spreading the revolution into Argentina, a closer look at the map shows that it would have been extremely difficult because of the distance from the border.

In summary, popular support was almost impossible to attain for Che because (1) he cut off his contacts with the urban areas, (2) he chose an area that was traditionally pro-military in a country that identified with the present regime. In the entire time that Che operated in the Nancahuasu area, he failed to recruit a single local peasant. Che began to recognize this too late. He admitted in his September summary that "now the Army appears to be more effective in its actions" and "the peasants do not give us any help and are turning into informers." He had received no aid from the peasants since the beginning of the Bolivian Adventure.¹³⁸

Guerrilla warfare, according to Che, is a war of the people and the guerrilla is essentially an agrarian revolutionary. The particular region Che selected for his base of operations in the southeast of Bolivia was precisely the one where agrarian revolutionaries were least needed. The peasants there had as a rule far more land than they could hope to work even with the help of their children. Landless peasants anywhere in Bolivia, who wanted some, could have it for the asking in the southeast. What then could

Che offer to local peasantry? Still more land that they could not use?"¹³⁹ What he faced was a peasantry that was not only passive and apathetic to his appeals, but one that was actively opposed to his ideas.¹⁴⁰ The peasantry, the armed forces, and a recently elected and fairly popular government all worked against him. Che's only hope of getting his foco operational was to enlist a measure of serious support from the miners, students, and Communists.¹⁴¹ He failed to attract more than a handful.

General Ovando said, "The guerrilla adventure ended just as any mad adventure must end. Its failure is due to the total absence of popular support and the aridity /sic/ of the terrain chosen."¹⁴²

Others have commented on Che's failure:

Chile's Foreign Minister Valdes said to L'Express:

I do not understand how a man as talented as brilliant, a man with so much experience in the Government only managed after 2 1/2 years to form a small group of barely 120 Guerrillas lost in the jungle. The understanding did not measure up to the man.¹⁴³

The French Ambassador told Larteguy:

Whatever gave those nincompoops the idea of coming to this country to set up a guerrilla front? Bolivia has just gotten over her revolution and it was no laughing matter. In 1952, there were 1500 corpses in the streets of LaPaz. The miners and their sticks of dynamite went into action against the army as did the workers militia and their old pop guns. There was a little lieutenant named Rene Barrientos in those militias. Today he is president of the Republic and the French newspapers are calling him a Fascist and a bloody tyrant. That kind of thing is out of style. All the land has been divided up, all the mines have been nationalized, the money disappeared abroad with members of the oligarchy. There are no big land holdings. Some like the Zabra have gone from 275,000 acres to 50 acres. There are no more large holdings or even any small ones. Barrientos was elected with tremendous popular support. He can even make speeches in Quechua and the Altiplano Indians are all for him."¹⁴⁴

Larteguy also acknowledged Barrientos' personal bravery. He tested every new aircraft that came into the country, and, when one of his paratroopers was killed while testing a new parachute, he immediately put on and

jumped one of the new chutes. Barrientos had brought back Paz-Estenssoro from exile to lead the country, and he had helped create the new army composed of the revolutionary elements.¹⁴⁵

ANALYSIS OF THE BOLIVIAN "ADVENTURE"

Sinclair lists the following as contributing to Che's failure:

1. Cubans in Bolivia. The natives of the country were strongly nationalistic and suspicious of outsiders.
2. The Bolivians were enjoying the first land reform in 300 years.
3. Che's failure to recruit a single peasant.
4. Che's isolation and ultimate betrayal.

Sinclair also notes, as contributing to Che's failure, that Che was asthmatic and middle aged. Che had been softened by years of administrative work when he decided to return to active combat, and, like Garibaldi, Che went out to fight again and failed.¹⁴⁶

Mallin's criticism includes the following:

1. Che was not an inhabitant of the zone, one of the requirements that he, himself, had laid out.
2. He was in ill health.
3. Che violated his own fundamental rule regarding mobility. He established and became tied to a base camp.¹⁴⁷ Debray refers to Che's own comments about his attempts to establish a base camp in the Sierra in 1957, in the Hombrito Valley. Debray says that this base camp idea was correct but premature.¹⁴⁸ ". . . For the guerrilla force to attempt to occupy a fixed base or depend on a security zone, even one of several thousand square kilometers in an area, is to all appearance to deprive itself of its best weapon, mobility."¹⁴⁹

The first stage of guerrilla warfare is most exposed and is subject to all sorts of accidents. The initial group experienced at the outset a period of absolute nomadism.¹⁵⁰ George Kolle Cuento, a prominent Bolivian Communist Party member, noted, "It so happened that the guerrillas in the eastern part of the country went into action with the Regular Army before they (the guerrillas) were supposed to. This means that the guerrillas began fighting before the movement in the cities and the mines could get off the ground or in order to coincide with the disintegration of the present government."¹⁵¹ Jorge Abelardo Ramos noted that Che's error was in looking at Latin America as one entity and in minimizing the working class.¹⁵² Monje criticizes Che's adventure with the following: "The Cuban experience is unique. Men can contribute to the ripening of the revolution and make it happen faster but they can't set the time periods for it. Revolutions arise from concrete historical conditions and not from men's wishes alone."¹⁵³

Another of Che's errors was his underestimation of U.S. response. He envisioned first sending U.S. advisors and then U.S. combat units into the area to create other Viet Nams. What really happened was that the Bolivian Army requests for heavy military equipment, jet aircraft, and napalm were turned down. U.S. News and World Report accurately observed: "The U.S. cannot defeat the guerrillas in Bolivia. The Bolivians still can, if they have the will to do it."¹⁵⁴ The fact the U.S. chose to give the Bolivians the training to accomplish the job themselves is significant. Gott acknowledges the U.S. intervention in this form as one of the reasons for Che's lack of success. He also acknowledges the lack of unity of the left and the lack of commitment of the left and also the ignorance of the detailed local conditions.¹⁵⁵

As mentioned earlier, at first glance the Bolivian Army appeared rather ridiculous, but there was another Bolivian Army that began to take form as soon as the Green Berets arrived. A few battalions at the most, but, when they went into action, they were anything but sorry looking.¹⁵⁶ Larteguy's description of Che is probably the most astute. "He was a Don Quixote, his head was stuffed with dreams and clouds and his revolution began like a fight against the windmills. Fidel is Sancho Panza. Sancho Panza often follows Don Quixote because the latter fascinates him and because at times he himself is a little like Don Quixote. Don Quixote has no common sense. Like Che he is led only by his holy madness, his taste for the absolute."¹⁵⁷ Less poetic and more realistic is his comment "It has been proven that the Sierra Maestra can never be recreated outside Cuba, that the Cuban Revolution was an exceptional phenomenon which will never reappear in the same form and that revolution today can never succeed on the basis of romanticism and improvisation."¹⁵⁸ Che's insistence on following the Cuban example without acknowledging the unique local differences placed the guerrillas outside any support from the Party or from dissident elements in the cities. The basic objective of the guerrilla movement was to put the government on the defensive by creating insecurity. In Bolivia the hoped-for isolation of the government, due to repression polarization and civil war, did not occur.¹⁵⁹

CHAPTER IX

A CRITIQUE OF CHE'S BOLIVIAN "ADVENTURE" IN LIGHT OF THE ELEMENTS OF REVOLUTIONARY WARFARE

A brief examination of Che's violations of some of the principles of revolutionary warfare is in order. The principle of security was violated in the following ways:

1. Che established no alternate base camp that would provide the guerrillas safe shelter. Everything depended on the main base at Nancahuasu. When that base was compromised, the guerrillas were forced to become nomads.

2. The base itself was too accessible as shown by the constant flow of visitors, journalists, and Party members.

3. After the first large ambush, Che remained in the base camp despite the need to move immediately out of the area.

4. The supplies that Che cached were critical, and, once these were lost, other supplies were not immediately accessible due to an inadequate supply system.

5. The pictures found in ten captured rucksacks resulted in the destruction of what little underground apparatus there was in the cities.

6. Basic security considerations in river-crossing techniques involve a thorough reconnaissance of both sides of the crossing site. In Joaquin's group these basic tactics were ignored, with disastrous results.

7. New recruits were allowed to become privy to too much information and, when deserters were apprehended by the government forces, they possessed a wealth of information.

8. The guerrillas struck before they were strong enough to insure complete success, and, once they were committed, they failed to follow up local success.

9. The guerrillas failed to disrupt the ranger training of the Bolivian forces.

10. There was no guerrilla propaganda effort to discredit the U.S. team at La Esperanza.

Che's insistence on running the show himself had placed the Bolivians in a subordinate role. This fact was not lost on the Bolivian peasants, the people whom Che was trying to recruit. It has been the experience of the writer in ten years of guerrilla and counterinsurgency warfare that the

successful advisor is one who allows the local leader to run the show. The strength of the advisor lies in his control of the support mechanism and his ability to influence the local leader, and this requires tact.

Once the guerrilla warfare operational area was defined by the government and sealed off, any communication with the cities was difficult. As a result of the failure of guerrilla communication, there was no liaison with the city and no coordinated action that could have resulted in the diversion of government troops into other areas.

These tactical errors and organizational weaknesses raise serious doubts as to Che's ability to function as a guerrilla commander in the field. The combination of age, poor health, and a hostile environment combined to destroy him, and not until the end of his diary did he begin to see things as they really were.

These errors and weaknesses might have been overlooked if the Bolivians had attempted to meet the threat he posed with conventional means. The denial of heavy weapons and aircraft by the United States had the effect of forcing the Bolivians to use those methods that are actually best suited for dealing with a potential insurgency--propaganda, military civic action, and small unit tactics.

As long as the Bolivian Army remained on the defensive, Che's group could, despite their weaknesses, maintain the initiative. The combination of a divided guerrilla force and aggressive counter-guerrilla activity placed the guerrillas on the defensive and turned them into a band of fugitives.

Che's failure to prepare adequately for this operation in the areas of security, logistics, and organization contributed to his downfall. The inability of the guerrillas to secure such necessities as medicine for Che's asthma is just one indicator of their supply problem. Inadequate security measures permitted untested recruits unlimited freedom in the camp, and their subsequent desertion led to the compromise of vital supplies and information. The habit of taking pictures led to the destruction of the urban support mechanism.

CHAPTER X

OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE OF GUERRILLA WARFARE

Just how applicable Castro's thesis is to the rest of Latin America is very much in question. Since Castro came to power in 1959, he and Che have supported more than a dozen guerrilla operations in Latin America, and not one of them has succeeded.¹⁶⁰ The prospect of violent revolution never looked particularly favorable anywhere on the South American continent. Guerrilla movements were in a state of retreat, and in Peru they were wiped out. In Colombia, Venezuela, and Guatemala, they were on the defensive due to internal dissensions. Despite these setbacks, many of these movements have continued to be encouraged by Che's example.¹⁶¹ Another reaction to the Castro thesis throughout Latin America was the Alliance for Progress which, despite its failure, did constitute a closer alliance between Washington and the Latin American countries. The various military takeovers in Latin America marked immediate setbacks for the guerrillas and the Soviet policy of peaceful coexistence makes traditional Communist Parties' support for the guerrillas difficult, if not impossible.¹⁶² Because of the Soviet policy, no Latin American Communist Party has ever regarded a guerrilla movement as an essential item in the struggle to secure power.¹⁶³ The traditional Communist Parties were vindicated for a while by Che's failure and Allende's election.¹⁶⁴ For those who are trying to determine what the future role of revolutionary warfare will be, there are the following considerations. There is a subtle distinction between the two positions of the revolutionary elements in Latin America. The traditionalists acknowledge that in the future there may arise some objective conditions that make revolution possible. At that time, the armed struggle can rely on the support of the masses and can grow into a victorious revolution.¹⁶⁵ The new revolutionaries say the task of the revolutionary is to go into the countryside and stir up the passive peasantry. They say it is not a question of whether Latin America is ready for revolution, but whether it needs a revolution.¹⁶⁶ In any case, guerrilla campaigns are likely to continue because they fit the conditions of the atomic age and at the same time they are well suited to take advantage of social discontent, racial ferment, and nationalistic fervor.¹⁶⁷ Allende's demise vindicates the extremists.

The destruction of the Che Guevara's operation in Bolivia and of other attempts at rural guerrilla warfare in Latin America have caused many strategists to reassess the value of urban guerrilla warfare. "It has become clear that provincial revolts rarely posed a direct threat to the government of countries where industry, wealth and power are concentrated in a few enormous metropolises."¹⁶⁸

The question of major importance now seems to be where they will take place in the future. There are strong indications that because of recent setbacks in rural areas, the shift is back to the cities. In forsaking Castro's formula, there appears to be a trend toward repeating the Venezuelan experience of 1962.¹⁶⁹ This is due in large part to the

increased capability of Latin American armies in handling rural insurgencies.¹⁷⁰ The Uruguayan terrorist example is instructive. Montevideo's 300 kilometers of streets were difficult to control, and there are tremendous propaganda benefits from a spectacular bank robbery or a kidnapping; e.g., Argentina.¹⁷¹ Thayer in his analysis of urban and rural advantages, notes that urban guerrillas operate in the very heart of the supply system, that the targets are much more concentrated, and that propaganda is easier. The disadvantages are the size limitations placed on guerrilla forces and operations, the need for dispersion, and the additional requirements for a more sophisticated security system.¹⁷² He takes exception to the view that guerrilla wars are impossible in an urban environment. He points to the Algerian experience and East European uprisings. He feels that the failure of the latter is due to the absence of preparation and outside support rather than to the unsuitability of the terrain.¹⁷³ By forcing the government to protect the economic and political centers of the country, the Latin American guerrilla may again begin to enjoy success. Whatever option these revolutionaries choose, they will have to improve the communication systems of both rural and urban operations. The major weakness in the recent adventures has been this lack of organization and coordination within and between the two areas.

The success of counter-guerrilla operations in Latin America has pointed out another weakness. Many Latin American revolutions in the past have been successful only when the military forces have defected to the rebels.¹⁷⁴ Kenworthy wrote, "It is hard to imagine any revolution succeeding that does not divide the officer corps."¹⁷⁵ The Latin American officer corps of today has become a very effective counter-guerrilla force. The officers have become socially conscious in recent years and these officers are much more aware of the elements of revolutionary warfare than were their predecessors. They know that in order to beat the guerrillas they must develop empathy and understanding with the people. They also know that they must avoid actions that will result in negative public opinion and have a well-defined and well-managed program.

It must be understood that rebellion is often a symptom of misgovernment, and it teaches us that unless the local regime undertakes a measure of true reform, even the greatest military power in the world can be successfully stalemated for a long period of time by lightly armed peasant guerrillas. Bernard Fall warned, "If revolutionary war were simply a jungle war, every regular force could win it. Americans know how to fight jungle wars but one can fight a revolutionary war in Norway or in France. It doesn't take a jungle to fight a revolutionary war. One can take over a village in the highlands of Viet Nam and a village in the lowlands of Belgium in the same way."¹⁷⁶

CHAPTER XI

SUMMARY

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The examples of insurgency, revolutionary or guerrilla warfare cited in this paper, while possessing unique geographical, sociological, and political characteristics, also contain similarities that facilitate comparison. The common element is that of popular support. Whether it was resistance to a foreign invader, expulsion of a colonial power, or change in political system, none were accomplished without popular support. Insurgents have often been guilty of underestimating the importance of the population, have relied too heavily on purely military solutions, and have suffered setbacks and defeat. Successful movements have been marked by the ability of the leadership element to marshal popular support. By accurately assessing (or by stimulating) popular goals, desires, and expectations, insurgents have been able to channel those desires into action. The specialized insurgent organization in addition to simply voicing popular desires, conducts numerous activities including armed propaganda, terror, sabotage, assassination, and guerrilla warfare. The choice of activity may depend on geographical, sociological, and/or political considerations. In one situation a Grivas might use terror as the only viable option while in another situation a Castro might use several.↙

Whatever the methods used, some form of outside support is required. Arms, ammunition, supplies, training, specialists, advisors, safe areas, and financial support are some of the types of aid that have been provided for insurgency movements from outside sources. Every successful insurgency has had its sponsor.

When a cause can be identified and enunciated by a well-led, and well-organized apparatus with a sponsor, success can be expected.

A government's continuity in power is just as dependent on popular support as is the insurgent. No political power can be secure unless it is responsive to the will of the people. If a government fails to redress the wrongs of its society or reflect the aspirations of its people, there exists a potential challenge to its power. Any government, in any society can be so challenged.

APPENDIX

Annex A

From: Jay Mallin (p. 229-234)

LIST OF PERSONS APPEARING IN BUSTOS' ACCOUNT OF GUEVARA'S GUERRILLAS IN BOLIVIA OR OTHERWISE IDENTIFIED AS BEING WITH THE GUERRILLAS

War Name	Real Name	Position with Guerrillas	Fate	Previous Occupation
Ramon	Ernesto "Che" Guevara de la Serna	Commander in Chief	Died Oct 9, '67, in La Higuera	Maj., Cuban Army; Min. of Industries; Member PCC Central Committee
CUBANS				
Alejandro	Gustavo R. Machin Hoed de Beche (Tavo)	Member of Center; Chief of Operations; because of illness remained with Rear on Apr 17, '67	Died Aug 31, '67, in Vado del Yeso	Maj., Cuban Army; Military Chief of Matanzas
Antonio	Orlando Pantoja Tamayo (Olo)	Member of Center; Chief of Information	Died Oct 8, '67, in Valle-grande	Chief, Cuba's Border Forces
Arturo	Nelson Aspuru	Member of Center; radio operator	Died Oct 8, '67 in Valle-grande	Chief, Fidel Castro, Jr.'s bodyguards
Benigno	Daniel Alarcon Ramirez	Member of Vanguard	Returned to Cuba	Not known
Braulio	Israel Reyes Zayas	Member of Rearguard	Died Aug 31, '67, in Vado del Yeso	Lt. Cuban Army
Joaquin	Juan Vitalio Acuna Nunez (Vilo)	Chief of Rear-guard, second in command to Guevara	Died Aug 31, '67, in Vado del Yeso	Maj. Cuban Army; member PCC Central Committee

War Name	Real Name	Position with Guerrillas	Fate	Previous Occupation
Marcos	Antonio Sanchez Diaz	Chief of Vanguard replaced by Miguel Mar 25, '67; became member of Rearguard	Died June 2, '67, in Iquira	Maj. Cuban Army; member PCC Central Committee
Miguel	Not known	Chief of Vanguard as of Mar 25, '67	Died Sep 26, '67, in Abra de Picacho	Not known
Moro, Mugamba, Morogoro, Medico	Octavio de la Concepcion de la Pedraja	Member of Center; Chief Surgeon	Died Oct 14, '61, in Vallegrande	Lt., Cuban Army; Physician in Havana hospital
Pacho, Pocho, Pachungo	Alberto Fernandez Montes de Oca	Member of Vanguard	Died Oct 8, '67 in Vallegrande	Cap., Cuban Army; Director of Mines
Pombo	Harry Villegas	Member of Center; Chief of Supplies	Returned to Cuba	Cap., Cuban Army
Ricardo, Papi,	Roberto(?) Aspuru	Preliminary contacts in Bolivia, Chief of Communications; Member of Center	Died July 30, '67, in Morocco	Was with Guevara in the Congo
Rolando	Eliseo Reyes Rodriguez	Member of Center; Political Commissar; acted temporarily as Chief, Rearguard, Mar '67	Died Apr 25, '67, in El Meson	Cap., Cuban Army; member PCC, Central Committee
Rubio, Felix	Jesus Suarez Gayol	Member of Rearguard	Died Apr 10, '67 in Iripiti	Cap., Cuban Army; Vice-Minister, Ministry of Sugar Industry

War Name	Real Name	Position with Guerrillas	Fate	Previous Occupation
Tuma, Tumaini	Not known	Member of Center	Died Jun 26, '67, in Piray de la Florida	Was with Guevara in the Congo
Urbano	Leonardo Tamayo Nunez	Member of Center	Returned to Cuba	Cap., Cuban Army; Secretary, Cuban Delegation to Punta del Este '61

BOLIVIANS

(deserter)	Pastor Barrera Quintana	Arrived in camp while Guevara was on exploratory march with most of his men	Deserted in early Mar '67; arrested	Recruited by Moises Guevara
(deserter)	Vicente Rocabado Terrazas	Same as above	Same as above	Same as above
Aniceto	Ancito Reynaga Gordillo	Member of Vanguard	Died Oct 9, '67, in La Higuera	Member, National Executive Committee, Bolivian Communist Youth
Camba	Orlando Jimenez Bazan	Member of Vanguard	Deserted Sep 26, '67; arrested	Not known
Carlos	Lorgio Vaca	Participant, exploratory march	Drowned Mar 17, '67, during march	Received guerrilla training in Havana
Coco	Roberto Peredo Leigue	Member of Vanguard	Died Sep 26, '67, in Abra de Picacho	Member, Bolivian Communist Party (pro-Moscow)
Chingolo	Hugo Choque Silva	Not accepted as guerrilla, was in Rearguard	Deserted July 23, 67; arrested	Recruited by Moises Guevara

War Name	Real Name	Position with Guerrillas	Fate	Previous Occupation
Dario	David Adriaola	Member of Vanguard	Not known	Farmer from Huanuni
Eusebio	Eusebio Tapia Aruni	Not accepted as guerrilla; was in Rear-guard	Deserted July 23, '67; arrested	Not known
Inti	Guido Peredo Leigue	Member of Center; Political Commissar; Bolivian Chief	Not known	Member, Bolivian Communist Party (pro-Moscow)
Julio, Medico	Mario Gutierrez Ardaya	Member of Vanguard; physician	Died Sep 26, '67, in Abra de Picacho	Physician from El Beni
Leon	Antonio Rodriguez Flores	Member of Center	Deserted Sep 26, '67; arrested	Not known
Loro, Jorge	Jorge Vazquez	Member of Vanguard	Captured in late in Mar '67; shot while trying to escape	Member, Bolivian Communist Party (pro-Moscow); trained in Cuba
Luis, Chapaco	Jaime Arana Campero	Member of Center	Died Oct 14, '67, in Valle-grande	Engineer, former student leader
Medico chino, Ernesto	Fredi Ernesto Maimura Hurtado	Member of Rearguard	Died Aug 31, '67, in Vado del Yeso	Received medical training in Cuba
Moises	Moises Guevara Rodriguez	Member of Center; later joined the Rearguard; recruiter	Died Aug 31, '67, in Vado del Yeso	Union leader; member Bolivian Communist Party (pro-Peking)
Nato	Julio Mendez Cano	Member of Center	Not known*	Not known

*Killed 15 Nov. Gott, Movements, p. 477.

War Name	Real Name	Position with Guerrillas	Fate	Previous Occupation
Pablo	Francisco Huanca Flores	Member of Vanguard	Died Oct 14, '67, in Vallegrande	Recruited by Moises; lived in Oruro
Paquito	Jose Castillo Chavez	Not accepted as guerrilla; was in Rear-guard	Captured Aug 31, '67, in Vado Del Yeso	Recruited by Moises
Pedro, Pan Divino	Antonio Jimenez Tardio	Member of Rearguard	Died, Aug 9, '67, in Monte	Member, National Executive Committee, Bolivian Communist Youth
Pepe	Julio Valasco Montano	Not accepted as guerrilla; was in Rear-guard	Deserted in late May; arrested, was killed May 23, '67 while trying to escape	Member, Bolivian Communist Party (pro-Peking)
Polo, Apolinar	Apolinar Aquino Quispe	Member of Rearguard	Died Aug 31, '67, in Vado del Yeso	Member, Bolivian Communist Party (Pro-Peking)
Raul	Raul Quispaya	Member of Vanguard	Died July 30, '67, in Morocco	Not known
Salustio	Salustio Choque	Arrived in camp while Guevara was on exploratory march	Arrested by police when the farm was raided in Mar '67	Not known
Serafin	Benjamin Coronado	Participant, exploratory march	Drowned Feb 26, '67 during march	Not known
Serapio	Not known	Called a refugee in Guevara's diary; was in Rearguard	Died July 9, '67	Not known

War Name	Real Name	Position with Guerrillas	Fate	Previous Occupation
Victor	Casildo Vargas Condori	Member of Rearguard	Died Jun 2, '67, in Iquira	Carpenter
Walter	Walter Arencibia Ayala	Member of Rearguard	Died Aug 31, '67, in Vado del Yeso	Not known
Willy, Ulises	Simon Cuba	Member of Center	Died Oct 9, '67, in La Higuera	Union leader

PERUVIANS

Chino	Juan Pablo Chang Navarro	Came as visitor later member of Center	Died Oct 8, in Vallen-grande	Peruvian Communist leader; trained in Cuba
Eustaquio	Lucio Edelberto Salvan Hidalgo	Member of Center, radio technician	Died Oct 14, '67, in Valle-grande	Radio technician
Medico negro	Gustavo Rodriguea Murillo	Member of Rearguard, physician	Died Sep 3, '67, in Canon Palmarito	Cardiologist

ARGENTINES

Pelao, Carlos Mauricio	Ciro Roberto Bustos	Came to organize support for guerrillas in Argentina	Left and was arrested; tried and sentenced to 30 years	Commercial artist; active in leftist causes in Salta, Argentina
Tania, Elma	Haydee Tamara Bunke Bider alias Laura Gutierrez Bauer de Martinez	In charge of external contacts; remained with Rear-guard	Died Aug 31, '67, in Vado del Yeso	Born in Argentina, went to East Germany, then to Cuba; had been identified as a Soviet spy planted in Guevara's group

War Name	Real Name	Position with Guerrillas	Fate	Previous Occupation
FRENCH				
Frances Danton	Jules Regis Debray	Came to organize support for guerrillas in Europe; allegedly a courier between guerrillas and Havana	Left and was arrested; tried and sentenced to 30 years	Writer, theoretician on the Cuban revolution
BRITISH				
Ingles	George Andrew Roth	Came to obtain information for publications	Left with Debray and Bustos; arrested, and released	Freelance journalist

Annex B

TABLES

TABLE A
Rate of Land Reallocation Under Bolivia's
Agrarian Reform^a

Year	Number of new titles distributed	Number of families Number of titles	Land areas allocated in titles
1955	3,400	2,809	51,811 hectares
1956	4,463	3,963	47,183
1957	11,400	8,028	276,396
1958	9,193	5,709	201,998
1959	18,380	12,097	320,502
1960	38,897	22,410	852,771
1961	45,511	28,210	1,167,821
1962	50,227	28,843	1,280,742
1963	47,461	40,641	1,363,591
1964	18,317	11,295	565,443
1965	15,600	9,652	388,282
1966	16,892	10,498	928,757
1967 ^a	12,082	7,404	460,986
	<u>291,823</u>	<u>191,459</u>	<u>7,906,283 hectares</u>

^athrough August 31, 1967

Sources: Dwight B. Heath, Land Reform and Social Revolution in Bolivia, Praeger 1969 and Paul Alfonso Garcia, Diez Anos de Reforma Agraria en Bolivia, Direccion Nacional de Informaciones La Paz 1963.

TABLE B

U.S. Net Financial Commitments to Bolivia, 1946-1956^a

(Millions of Dollars)

U.S. Fiscal Year	Total Obligations	Social Progress Trust Fund ^b	P.L.480 Food For Peace ^c	Export- Import Bank Loans	Other (1946-1954) Peace Corps (1962-1966)	Mili- tary Assis- tance ^d	USAID	
							Loans ^c	Grants ^c
1946	.4	--	--	--	.4	--	--	--
1947	3.4	--	--	3.0	.4	--	--	--
1948	.4	--	--	--	.4	--	--	--
1949	.7	--	--	.3	.4	--	--	--
1950	16.5	--	--	16.0	.5	--	--	--
1951	.5	--	--	--	.5	--	--	--
1952	1.5	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.5
1953	1.3	--	--	--	--	--	--	1.3
1954	18.2	--	.3	2.4	8.0	--	--	7.5
1955	33.5	--	16.0	4.7	--	--	--	12.8
1956	28.0	--	2.7	--	--	--	--	25.3
1957	26.8	--	4.0	--	--	--	--	22.8
1958	22.1	--	--	--	--	.1	--	22.0
1959	24.6	--	.4	--	--	.3	4.0	19.9
1960	13.8	--	2.8	--	--	--	--	13.6
1961	29.9	--	3.4	--	--	.4	7.3	19.4
1962	38.3	--	16.2	--	.9	2.2	7.6	24.2
1963	65.3	10.5	14.0	--	.7	2.4	18.3	17.2
1964	78.9	.8	4.6	--	2.5	3.2	42.6	15.8
1965	14.4	3.3	6.3	--	2.2	1.9	6.0	8.4
1966	38.8	--	--	--	2.6	2.4	21.8	5.7
TOTAL	457.3	14.6	70.9	26.4	19.5	12.9	95.6	217.4

^aExpenditures not reported in source. ^bAdministered by Inter-American Development Bank.

^cAdministered by USAID/Bolivia. ^dDisbursements.

Source: Data provided by USAID/Washington, Statistics and Reports Division: "Worksheet", May 4, 1966; U.S. Economic Assistance Programs...April 3, 1948-June 30, 1967 (1968) 27; and U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants and Assistance from International Organizations; Obligations and Loan Authorizations, July 1, 1945-June 30, 1967, prepared for the House Foreign Affairs Committee (1968), advance copy.

Annex C

After Action Reports
Of MTT BL-404-67x

29 May 1967

29 April 1967 thru 29 May 1967

MTT BL 404-67X arrived Santa Cruz, Bolivia, 291910Z April 1967, aboard two (2) C-130 aircraft. Transportation was provided for personnel and equipment to training site. Detachment arrived at the training site 290020Z April 1967. Training site had been changed from Guabira (original site agreed upon by Survey Team) to La Esperanza, Bolivia (Coordinates 63 degrees 3 feet West 17 degrees 3 feet South).

Training began on 8 May 1967. (See attached training schedules.) The unit is presently in Phase I, Basic Individual Training as referenced in Program of Instruction for MTT BL 404-67X, dated April 1967.

In Phase I, the Battalion is divided into three (3) groups for training. Each group trains under separate schedules. At the end of each week, the groups are then rotated until all groups have received all subjects. This method has proved successful to date. The Battalion is presently in the fourth (4th) week of training.

On 10 May 1967, General Ovando (Commander of the Bolivian Armed Forces) arrived. He was briefed by the Detachment and Battalion Commanders. He appeared highly pleased with the activities being conducted. He was also pleased with the relationship established between the Detachment and the Bolivian Officers and NCOs of the Battalion.

As a civic action project, steps have been taken and coordination made with USAID for the construction of a new school for the town of La Esperanza. The existing school is in a horrible state of repair, and a new one is essential for the community.

A medical program has been established for both the military and civilians in the area. This program has been hampered somewhat by the lack of medical supplies. However, an increase in medical supplies is expected in the near future. The Detachment Medics have treated approximately 350 persons to date.

29 June 1967

29 May 1967 through 29 June 1967

29 May 1967, the Battalion began the 2nd three weeks of training in Phase I. Firing of the three basic weapons began on this date. (See attached Training Schedule.) The Battalion has shown tremendous progress since the beginning of training.

19 June 1967, Phase II of training began on this date.

CIVIC ACTION:

A school is proposed as a Civic Action Project for the village of La Esperanza. The proposed school will have four (4) classrooms and one (1) office. At the present time there are a total of two hundred and eighty (280) students attending school. There are only three classrooms, none of which are suitable for the students. Mr. Sanford White, a USAID Representative is working with us. Mr. Harry Singh, an American Construction Company Foreman will furnish some materials and machinery for the construction of the school. A town Committee was organized and a quota for the habitants was established. A school function was held on 25 June 1967 to raise funds for the construction of the school. The profits of this function, plus the quota, will be the contribution that the habitants of La Esperanza will donate. The labor will be furnished by the Ranger Battalion and the people of La Esperanza. The construction will commence in July 1967. Professionals from Bartos Construction Company and from MTT Shelton will supervise the construction. The school is expected to be finished by August 1967.

29 July 1967

30 June through 29 July 1967

Phase III of training cycle (Reference POI, BL404-67X, dated April 1967) began on 10 July 1967.

Phase III of the Training Program terminates the date of this report. Training during this phase has been arduous and fruitful. The individual soldier has improved tremendously during this phase, and the interest of the entire Battalion remains high. If fully equipped and manned, the Battalion could be an effective fighting unit at this time.

During this reporting period, General Rene Barrientos Ortuno (president of Bolivia) visited this site and addressed the Battalion and Detachment members at a formation. He presented each of the Battalion Officers and NCO's with a gift. His address was a great moral booster to the Battalion. It came at an opportune time and may be able to carry them through some of the more arduous training which will come in Phase IV.

CIVIC ACTION:

The Civic Action project cited in our last monthly Activities Report has begun. Many of the materials have been received, and construction, under the supervision of an engineer had been underway for approximately two weeks. However, one week was lost due to inclement weather and heavy rain storms. This project is a great morale factor to the civilians in the area, and the villagers have been organized into working parties to assist in the construction.

A second major problem that now arises is the lack of a Battalion Staff. In the past the Company Commanders have been doubling as Staff Officers which has been sufficient. However, with the Battalion nearing the end of training and about to go operational, this problem becomes more apparent and severe. All concerned personnel in the US MILGP are aware of this problem. Efforts are being made at that level to rectify this.

29 August 1967

30 July through 29 August 1967

Reference Program of Instruction for training being conducted. Phase IV has been extended three additional weeks. One week is being utilized in performing Company Tests at the present training site. The remaining two weeks will be conducted in a new area where the terrain is similiar to the Operational Area where the Battalion will be operating upon completion of training.

CIVIC ACTION:

The school being constructed as a civic action project is progressing rapidly. The walls are nearing completion. Coordination has been made with the U.S. Embassy in La Paz and the Ambassador has agreed to pay for the materials for the roof and windows. At the present time, the expected time of completion is mid-October.

30 September 1967

29 Aug 67 thru 29 Sep 67

9 September: The 2nd Ranger Battalion began a two week field exercise approximately 15 miles southwest of Santa Cruz. This FTX allowed the battalion to operate as a unit in terrain similiar to that of its proposed area of operations.

11 September: The battalion was issued 4 new American mortars (81mm) to replace the older French models. All mortar sections returned to La Esperanza for training with the new models. Training included mechanical training, crew drill and range firing.

15 September: Phase IV of the training was completed. This ended 19 weeks of formal instruction for the Battalion.

CIVIC ACTION:

The school project continues to progress. However, USAID has not made available the funds promised for the roofing material as of this date.

1 November 1967

30 September thru 29 October 1967

12 October: Received confirmation from 8th Bolivian Division that Guevara was dead.

CIVIC ACTION

Work continues on the school. The Director of the Santa Cruz Office of USAID, Mr. Sanford White, visited and left \$800.00 for the roof for the school. He indicated that he is holding in reserve another \$300.000 for use when the \$800.00 has been spent. These funds were made available by the office of the Ambassador. The Medics spent one week on Medical Civic Action.

30 November 1967

30 October thru 30 November 1967

CIVIC ACTION:

Construction on the local school is really moving now, the window sills have been installed, and most of the roofing has been completed. It is going to be a fine building.

10 December 1967

Report of Mobile Training Team to Bolivia (RCS CSGPO-125)

ITINERARY

- a. Departed home station.....Advance Party 8 Apr
Main Body 29 Apr
- b. Arrived in host country.....Advance Party 8 Apr
Main Body 29 Apr
- c. Training started.....8 May 67
- d. Training ended.....15 Dec 67
- e. Estimated date of departure from
host country.....Advance Party 19 Dec
Main Body 22 Dec
- f. Estimated date of arrival at home
station.....Advance Party 19 Dec
Main Body 22 Dec

TRAINING AREAS

a. All training except a two week field training exercise was conducted in La Esperanza, 80 kilometers north of Santa Cruz, site of an abandoned sugar mill. Classroom instruction was conducted in old work shops, garages and compartments of the huge building housing the mill machinery. Field training was conducted on the huge expanse of land surrounding the sugar mill.

b. A field exercise was conducted from 3 Sep until 16 Sep at La Guardia approximately 20 kilometers Southwest of Santa Cruz along the Cochabamba highway. The purpose of the exercise was to accustom the 2d Ranger Battalion to the terrain found in the Guerrilla Warfare Operational Area.

PERSONNEL TRAINED

- a. 2d Ranger Battalion 650 men
- b. 9 Rifle companies 957 men

MISSION

a. To form and train a Ranger Battalion in Basic individual, advanced individual, basic unit, and advanced unit training, and conduct counter-insurgency training, and in addition, to conduct cadre training for officers and non-commissioned officers. (19 weeks)

b. To conduct refresher training for a period of 4 weeks each, training 3 rifle companies at a time, for a total of 9 companies. (11 weeks)

TRAINING COURSES

a. Training courses for training the Ranger Battalion were as follows:

(1) Phase I, 6 weeks basic individual training. From 8 May thru 17 Jun.

(2) Phase II, 3 weeks advanced individual training. From 19 June thru 8 Jul.

(3) Phase III, 3 weeks basic unit training. From 10 Jul thru 29 Jul.

(4) Phase IV, 5 weeks advanced unit training. From 31 Jul thru 2 Sep.

(5) Phase V, 2 weeks field training exercise. From 3 Sep thru 16 Sep.

b. Training courses for the refresher training for the rifle companies were as follows.

(1) 1st Week--Weapons Training

(2) 2nd Week--Individual Combat Training

(3) 3rd Week--Squad and Platoon Tactics and Patrolling

(4) 4th Week--Counterinsurgency

c. 1st Cycle began 9 Oct 67 and ended 4 Nov 67. The following companies were trained:

Co B, 5th Div: CPT Jauier Beltran CO STRENGTH: 123 men

Co D, 3rd Div: Sub Tte Ricardo Monda CO STRENGTH: 113 men

Co A, 4th Div: CPT Julio Vericoches C. CO STRENGTH: 101 men

c. 2nd Cycle began 6 Nov 67 and ended 2 Dec 67. The following Companies were trained:

Co B, 4th Div: Lt Suarez Adolfolezn CO STRENGTH: 105 men

Co C, 5th Div: Lt Gurardo Zambrano CO STRENGTH: 117 men

Co Brauno, 8th Div: CPT Emetorio Pereira CO STRENGTH: 89 men

e. 3rd Cycle began 4 Dec 67 and ended 30 Dec 67. The following Companies were trained: (MTT departed 22 Dec 67, last two weeks of instruction were conducted by Bolivian Military Personnel).

Co E, 3rd Div: Lt Enrique Zuleta Bravo CO STRENGTH: 90 men

Co A, 7th Div: Lt Carlos Tapia Villarreal CO STRENGTH: 108 men

Co C, 7th Div: Esc. de Clases: CPT Jose P. Meruvia
CO STRENGTH: 111 men

ADEQUACY OF TRAINING INSTALLATIONS: Training facilities though improvised were adequate for both classrooms and field.

TRAINING MATERIALS

a. Virtually all training material was carried into host country by team on initial entry by means of 2 C-130 aircraft.

b. TO&E equipment of the Ranger Battalion was late arriving and will be covered further in para 12. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED.

INTERPRETER SUPPORT: No interpreter support was required, the MTT was entirely bilingual.

CONDITIONS

a. The call up was received in the latter part of March. The purpose of the MTT as stated in the initial mission was to develop and train the Ranger Battalion which was originally programmed for 1968. The need for a well-trained counter-guerrilla force was accentuated by the reports in March 1967 of guerrilla activity in Southeast Bolivia. During the conduct of training of the Ranger Battalion the team received an extension in order to conduct the refresher training for the nine (9) rifle companies.

b. The Ranger Battalion was composed of conscripts with an initial obligation of 1 year service. A 2-year obligation was promised by the Bolivian Army; however, no public announcement has been made in reference to

this. At the time of this report, all personnel except the NCO's and Officers were fresh recruits with no previous military training. The average educational level of the personnel was 5 years.

c. The rifle companies who received refresher training were composed of personnel with varied military experience. Most all personnel had served in the combat area before arriving at the training site. The average level of education of personnel was 5 years.

EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING

a. The training of the 2d Ranger Battalion was tremendously effective as evidenced by the fact that within 12 days after being committed to the operational area the battalion found and destroyed Che Guevara and his guerrilla band.

b. The four (4) week refresher training of the rifle companies achieved the stated purpose to rebuild the rifle squads with an increase of automatic fire power and will to fight and return them to the operational area as a more effective unit.

c. Another very serious problem that remained throughout the entire nineteen (19) weeks of training was the shortage of officers and NCO's. They were never equipped with a complete Battalion Staff. In the early stages of the training, the Company Commanders were utilized in a dual role, and doubled as Staff Officers. As the training progressed, it became quite apparent this was not a workable solution, as it took more and more of their time to command their companies. Eventually two additional officers were assigned as the S-1 and S-2. The battalion Executive Officer, is at present, acting as the S-3. Due to this problem, it was impossible to establish and/or conduct staff procedures, operational planning and training organization instruction. Consequently, the majority of this work was left up to the Detachment.

d. Until last month, the Bolivian Army had no combat ration with the exception of some American "C" Rations which were being utilized in the GWOA. Consequently, the unit trained by this MTT did not have a combat ration. This posed a problem in training, in that field training could not be conducted for extended periods of time without moving the Battalion mess facility. Therefore, small unit patrolling was limited to approximately eight (8) to ten (10) hours in duration. This was done at times without water or rations.

e. A problem that was continuously prevalent throughout the entire mission was the lack of transportation from La Paz to the training site. This was true with the Bolivian supply channels and the USMILGP Transportation capabilities. Supplies and Equipment for the Battalion remained in La Paz for extended periods of time before being transferred to the training site,

also equipment sent from the Canal Zone for use by the MTT; i.e., Medical Supplies, Training Aids, and miscellaneous equipment needed by the detachment were delayed due to a lack of transportation. On two occasions equipment for the detachment was pilfered prior to its arrival at the site.

PREPARATION FOR MISSION: Adequate time and information was provided this MTT for its mission preparation.

CONCLUSIONS: The training presented was effective and the unit trained is an effective fighting unit. At the date of this report, the 2d Ranger Battalion is the best trained unit in the Bolivian Army! The combat effectiveness of the nine (9) rifle companies retrained was greatly improved with training received and automatic weapons issued.

CIVIC ACTION

a. An extensive medical program to include sick calls in the surrounding villages was initiated upon arrival at the training site and continued until the final period of training. The following data is submitted:

No. of U.S. Military treated: 16

No. of Host Country Military treated: 1,000

No. of Host Country Civilians treated: 2,500

Amount of drugs expended: Approximately \$10,000.00

b. A very effective military/civil relationship was established with help on public works, such as helping secure the loan of a road grader from an American Construction Company, and reached its peak when the position and good offices of the team served successfully as a sounding board to air the dispute of legal rights between the population (Squatters by legal rights) and the holding company that bought the huge factory farmland complex of La Esperanza.

c. The primary and most successful project in our civic action program was the construction of a school in the town of La Esperanza. This was accomplished with US \$1,100 from the ambassador and help from Paul Hardenman construction company, labor by the Bolivian Soldiers and the people of La Esperanza. It is the best school in the district and is valued at approximately \$4,000.

d. The harmony and good will created by the C.A. program served many real and worthwhile causes. One of those causes was the accurate and timely intelligence available to the team providing the invaluable security that was absolutely necessary in this operation.

Annex D

Summary of Interviews with
Bolivian Military Personnel

DOCUMENT ORIENTATION

As all of these notes were taken without the aid of a diary or available maps, it is expected that certain discrepancies will arise in regard to exact times and locations. This history is designed as only an early orientation toward the important conflicts of the Vallegrande and Higuera operational areas.

Interrogation of Officers of Company B, 2nd Ranger Bn

During the period 29 October to 31 October, Capt. Gary Prado of B Company, 2nd Ranger Bn, Lt Espinoza of 3rd Platoon, B Company, Lt Tonti of 4th Platoon, B Company, and one unnamed officer of A Company commented on different aspects of the activities of the Ranger Bn during the period 26 September to 14 October. The following is a compilation of their remarks. The majority of the text was solicited from Lt Espinoza during the morning of the 30th at 8th Division Hq, Santa Cruz, Bolivia, excepting that portion dealing with the demise of Che Guevara.

Resulting from information received after the battle at Higuera on the 26th of September (where Coco Peredo was killed), the Ranger Bn was given the mission of setting up a screening force along the river San Antonio to prevent exfiltration of the G force from the area of operations. The Bn left Esperanza at 1600 on the 26th and arrived at Pucara at 1100 hours on the 27th. From Pucara, Company A and Company C proceeded to Vallegrande while Company B and one section of mortars (2), moved to Charnol by way of Wuinal and San Antonio. During the movement to Charnol, Capt Prado received information that there was G activity around the town of San Antonio. Company B, minus the mortar section, moved from the town into the Quebrada (ravine) San Antonio. During the approach, the company observed through binoculars one G cutting through the brush. They assumed that this man was acting as a point for a larger force, and deployed to form an ambush. At this time, one mortar was brought up to support the operation. 1st and 2nd platoons formed an L-shaped ambush to act as the blocking force while 3rd platoon initiated pursuit. 3rd Platoon moved up the Quebrada toward the blocking force and drove the G into the area of the 2d platoon, where he was captured. (See diagram 2.) The G was known as "Gamba," and appeared to be in poor health and was poorly clothed. He stated that he had been separated from the rest of the force since the battle at La Higuera, and was traveling in this area in hopes of contacting Ramon (Che Guevara).

The capture of "Gamba" had an immediate morale effect on the troops. Previously they had thought of the G's as very strong and clever, but after seeing "Gamba" without shoes and suffering from malnutrition, they gained confidence in their ability to destroy the G band. The soldiers began to joke and deride "Gamba" asking him why he hadn't stayed at home. "Gamba" apparently was very contrite, and this also sparked confidence and courage among the troops.

The company moved on to Charnol, where they rested for the remainder of the day. On the 28th, Capt Prado began sending out patrols and intelligence teams, dressed in civilian clothes. One team brought back information that a house nearby had been a possible refuge for one or two G's. This was not fully investigated until the Company received word that "Leon" had been captured by Company A on 1 August, after they had moved south from Vallegrande. Company A sent word to Capt Prado that "Leon" returned to the house, and after a thorough search, discovered a carbine and several hundred

rounds of ammunition. As Charnol is one of the only fording sites for the Rio Grande in the area, it appeared that the G force had been planning to move through this area and exfiltrate. However, the arrival of the Bn in this region, plus the additional support of Company Munchago and one company of CITE at Charnol, probably caused the G leaders to attempt another exit farther west. This, or the extreme asthmatic problems of Guevara, caused the G force to move to higher ground in the La Higueras area.

On 2 October, 1st platoon, 3rd platoon, and one mortar section of Company B departed and moved along the Rio Grande toward El Fuente. At G-Campo, 3rd Platoon crossed to the South bank of the river, and the group proceeded to El Fuente with 1st Platoon and the mortar section on the north bank and 3rd Platoon on the south. At El Fuente the company joined with another company of CITE and the company Florida. The Florida company was made up of pure colles (Indians or the Altiplano) that were supposed to be some of the best troops for rough, mountainous terrain.

On 2 October, the remaining of the elements that made up B Company gathered at El Fuente. That afternoon, 1st Platoon, under the command of Lt Venigas, returned to Quibal to cover the Quebrada San Antonio. Since Company A had been dispatched to Pucura, the Bn now had a coverage from Pucura, through Quinal and Chartal to El Fuente.

On 3 October, Capt Prado received the order to proceed to Estanque. After departing, they received another order that scheduled them to arrive at Pucura on the 5th. When the Company arrived at Estanque they received intelligence that there was G activity in the town of Pugie. The company immediately moved to Pugie and learned that the G's had moved again toward La Higueras. To screen the area, Capt Prado broke the company into two elements, sending 1 platoon toward Trancho Mayo and the other elements toward the town of Abra del Picache. The two units maintained constant radio contact during this period.

On 4 October, the two elements rejoined at Pleacho and rested for the entire day. The next morning, 5 October, Capt Prado received an order to remain in place until they received further instructions from Major Ayorea at Vallegrande. During this time, Prado initiated vigorous patrolling toward La Higueras and Trancho Mayo. The Company now also had contact with A Company that had been operating from Vallegrande toward Picache. The patrolling continued through the 6th and 7th of October.

On 8 October, 2LT Pares of A Company received information that there was a band of 17 Gs in the Quebrada de Churro. As Perez did not have mortars, he communicated to Capt Prado the information and asked for support. Capt Prado sent the 3rd Platoon and 2 mortars to Higueras to support Lt Perez. Capt Prado accompanied the unit and commanded the mortar section.

The combined units of Company A and the supporting units from Company B moved into the area of the Quebrada Churro using two squads of Company A as

a blocking force a few kilometers north of the small Quebrada Gaino. Capt Prado set up his mortar section east of the Quebrada Churro, with 3rd Platoon of B company to his rear in support, under the command of Sgt Huaca. 1st Platoon of A Company under the command of Lt Perez entered the Quebrada Churro to the north and the confluence of two small streams. Lt Perez initiated the pursuit and began driving the G force south while Capt Prado's mortars shelled the ravine. At this point a machine gun was brought up to also cover the ravine and hold the left flank of Prado's mortar section and supporting troops. (See diagram 3.) As the 1st Platoon of A company pushed south they came under fire and lost 3 soldiers immediately. Capt Prado then ordered Sgt Huaca to move down the small Quebrada Tuscal and wait at the entrance of the Quebrada Churro. The 3rd Platoon of B company carried out this order and after finding nothing, was ordered to enter the Quebrada Churro and begin pursuit in the direction of Lt Perez's platoon. Sgt Huaca immediately encountered a group of 6 to 8 G's and opened fire. At this point they killed "Antonio" and "Orturo," two Cubans. Sgt Huaca lost one soldier here and received another wounded. Apparently this action broke up the bank and "Ramon" (Guevara) and "Willy" tried to break out in the direction of the mortar section. They were sighted by the machine gun crew which took them under fire. "Ramon" (Guevara) was hit in the lower calf and was helped by "Willy" toward the Quebrada Tuscal, where apparently they rested for a few minutes. They then moved north, directly in front of Capt Prado who ordered several soldiers to chase them. Soldiers Nacimos, Cheque, and Balboa were the first Bolivians to lay hands on Guevara. "Willy" and "Ramon" (Guevara) were later transported back to La Higuera with Capt Prado and the elements of A and B Companies. The Bolivians did not remain in position after nightfall. From 1900 hours until 0400 hours on the 9th, there were no significant Bolivian troops in the area of the fire-fight. This gave the G force ample time to escape the area, but either due to confusion after the battle or poor evaluation of the situation by their leader, the G force remained in the Quebrada Churro.

On 30 October 67 at a small Kiosco in La Esperanza, Bolivia, Sub Tte Ral Espinoza Lord, Company B, 2nd Ranger Bn, stated the following in regard to the handling of Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Guevara and Willy were transported back to La Higuera on the afternoon of the 8th, after the battle at the Quebrada Churro. Guevara had a slight wound in the lower calf, which was treated upon returning to Higuera. Tte Espinoza talked at length with Guevara, though Guevara did not reveal any pertinent information. Espinoza felt a high regard for Guevara as a soldier and man, and was anxious to know more of this "legendary figure." Guevara answered all of his question with remarks such as "perhaps" or "possibly." Early in the morning of the 9th of October, the unit received the order to execute Guevara and the other captives. Previously, Col Santana, Commander of the Ranger Bn, had given express orders to keep the prisoners alive. The Officers involved did not know where the order originated, but felt that it came from the highest echelons. Capt Prado gave the order to execute Guevara to Sub Tte Perez, but he was unable to carry out the order and in turn gave it to Sgt Terran, Company B. At this time Perez asked Guevara if there was anything he wished

before his execution. Guevara replied that he only wished to "die with a full stomach." Perez then asked him if he was a "materialist," by having requested only food. Guevara returned to his previous tranquil manner and answered only "perhaps." Perez then called him a "poor shit" and left the room. By this time, Sgt Terran had fortified his courage with several beers and returned to the room where Guevara was being held prisoner. When Terran entered the room, Guevara stood up, hands tied in front, and stated, "I know what you have come for--I am ready." Terran looked at him for a few minutes and then said, "No you are mistaken--be seated." Sgt Terran then left the room for a few moments.

"Willy," the prisoner taken with Guevara, was being held in a small house a few meters away. While Terran was waiting outside to get his nerve back, Sgt Huaca entered and shot "Willy." "Willy" was a Cuban and according to the sources had been an instigator of the riots among the miners in Bolivia. Guevara heard the burst of fire in his room and for the first time appeared to be frightened. Sgt Terran returned to the room where Guevara was being held. When he entered, Guevara stood and faced the Sergeant. Sgt Terran told him to be seated but he refused to sit down and stated, "I will remain standing for this." The Sgt began to get angry and told him to be seated again, but Guevara would say nothing. Finally Guevara told him "Know this now, you are killing a man." Terran then fired a burst from his M2 Carbine, knocking Guevara back into the wall of the small house.

Interviews with a doctor who had examined Guevara's cadaver and evaluation of available photos indicate that Guevara did have one wound in the lower calf, that appeared to the Doctor to have been received at a different time than the other wounds that were received at short range and directly from the front.

During the evening of the 8th and the morning of the 9th, Tte Espinoza had on his person a pipe that he said Guevara had given him during their night together at La Higuera. He showed this pipe to Lt Wallender and Capt Mitchell at the Kosco in La Esperanza and again to Lt Wallender at the 8th Division Hq in Santa Cruz on the morning of the 31st. The pipe was of an "air-cooling design" with a part of the stem exposed and made of silver colored metal. The bowl was black and appeared to have been smoked for some time. This pipe form agrees with the descriptions of the pipe "Ramon" had been using during earlier developments of the G operations.

At 0400 hours on the morning of the 9th, elements of A and B company returned to the Quebrada Churro and re-engaged the G force. 2nd Platoon of Company B and a mortar squad formed the blocking force and the confluence of the Quebrada and 3rd and 4th platoon of A Company began pursuit toward them. Lt Espinoza was with the mortars at this time and could observe the movement of the G's in the Quebrada. He took 6 men and entered the Quebrada and shot "El Chino" and Lario Vega. These were the only two G's who fell in

this action. After the initial contact, the G's could not be located so Capt Prado initiated patrols throughout the area. At nightfall the units again returned to HQ Higuera, leaving the area open.

The two companies patrolled the area from 10 to 12 October trying to regain contact. On the 12th intelligence was received that the G force had broken into two small groups trying to move out of the area through Portera. Company B departed La Higuera and headed in the direction of Portera, by Picacho and Trancho Mayo. At Trancho Mayo they could observe the G's with two young guides moving toward Portera. They could not determine exactly how many were in the group. To arrive ahead of the G's who were moving along a Quebrada, the company used the road and were able to get into position at Portera twenty minutes before they sighted the G's moving up the Quebrada in their direction. Lt Espinoza with a squad and one mortar formed a blocking force at the mouth of the Quebrada. 1st Platoon of B Company entered the Quebrada behind the G's and initiated pursuit. When Espinoza and his men opened fire on the G's they began to leap about. This confused Espinoza's soldiers though they continued to fire. The G's doubled back and climbed out of the Quebrada before the 1st Platoon could bring them under fire. 1st Platoon pursued them up the hill but lost contact at the top.

No casualties were suffered in this engagement and no G's fell, though they did drop their rucksacks when brought under fire by Lt Espinoza. The rucksacks contained food, various documents, and drugs. Surgical tools were also among the equipment in the rucksacks. Lt Espinoza was unable to describe the documents or the origin of the medical supplies.

On 18 August the Company attempted to block the G's again East of Portera but the G's immediately attacked one point of the circle and were able to break out killing 2 soldiers. By noon of the 13th the Company had lost contact completely with the G force.

The group was contacted by C Company on 14 October at El Cajon. This fight resulted in the death of 4 G's--El Chapaco, a Bolivian; El Seldade, a Bolivian; an assumed Bolivian; and one unnamed Cuban. This fight on the 14th was the last made by the Ranger Bn before leaving the area of operations. Many of the officers interviewed had details on this fight or could draw a map as to the exact location of El Cajon.

The original G force was 27. Seven were killed in action by Companies A and B and 4 were destroyed by C Company at El Cajon. Recent reports indicate that the Cubans had disarmed the Bolivian G's and seem to have them under guard. Apparently there is some sort of disagreement in the operation within the G organization. One farmer informed the authorities that the G's ate at his farm and rested. During this time, the Bolivians were kept separate from the Cubans and were watched closely by the Cubans. The Bolivians had no arms. All of the G's are shaved and have their hair cut. Officials believe that they are trying to move out of the area through Abapo or Cabezas.

Annex E

Letter from Major Ralph "Pappy" Shelton (Ret)

10 August 1972
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear John,

Five years have passed since the action in Bolivia. I'm not sure that this is the most advantageous nor opportune time for this part of the story but somehow I feel it is about time that someone did it.

Here are some photos and a few observations of my own.

In the beginning of the Warren report there is an analogy of the death of President Kennedy to the series of incidents that occurred aboard a pleasure cruise in the Caribbean, it goes like this; (look this up John). The Captain of the ship had suffered a heart attack, the first mate had been up all night fighting a storm, there was a cargo of animal hides below deck and to prevent the stench from the reaching of the passengers the vents to the lower cargo holes had been sealed. For some reason a leak in the main fire hose had not been repaired in port. As a consequence, the valve to this hose was closed off to prevent the drip. In line with these events came the fatal flaw of a fire which because of the chain of events listed happened. The irony of this is that if any link in the chain had not existed the fire probably would have been minor; however, because the conditions were as such it was a catastrophe.

I have used the same approach here John to the many unseemingly strange events leading up to the end of Che.

Some of the positive breaks that came our way were: this was my last military operation (you can elaborate here). Not only was this advantageous from the standpoint of maturity and experience but it also took me out of the rat race of "good efficiency reports." This was perhaps best illustrated by the conversation I had with one of the team members after we returned to Gulick. He was remarking about the success of the operation enhancing my career. I remarked that perhaps if this had happened 5 years or so earlier in my career that it might have had a great impact on my military career; however, if it had been presented to me earlier in my career I'm not sure I would have done it the same way.

P.S. The continuing happenings and circumstances that I mentioned above are continued on the next page. . .

Circumstances having a definite bearing on the success of MTT BL 404-67X.

1. Professionalism

- A. 18 years service for one

B. My close personal relationship w/Gen. Porter (all I had to do was ask for equipt. If staff said no I'd go see him personally).

2. Harry Signh (the civilian contractor who was our Benefactor) who gave us support from Building materials to a Bulldozer for building the range.

3. Che was trapped by and tried to break through the best platoon of the best company in the Ranger Bn. Gary Prado's "C" Co. and 3rd Plt commanded by Sgt. Huaca.

4. Che failed to follow up his raid on Samaipata (he was unaware of his psychological victory there). The people in Santa Cruz were about to "_____ in their pants."

5. Che failed to disrupt the training of Ranger Bn.

A. No attacks on camp.

B. No Hostages.

C. No discrediting the American Team.

D. No ambushes on our supply route.

6. Excellent support for U.S.--(All of Southern resources)

7. Poor support for Che (in his diary poor food, eating horses, etc).

8. Alejandro's ambush by the "Lion of Masicuri" and the obvious basic mistake of an unsecured river crossing.

9. Loss of Rucksacks by guerrillas with undeveloped photos--captured by Bolivian Army.

Pappy

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